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TRANSFORMERS™
WRITTEN BY
SIMON FURMAN
UPDATED EDITION
THE ULTIMATE GUIDE

TRANSFORMERS™

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE

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SIMON FURMAN

DK

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NOTE: The abbreviations "G1" and "G2" refer to TRANSFORMERS "Generation 1" and "Generation 2."

INTRODUCTION

BACK IN 1984, there was no escaping the relentless march across toy shelves and TV screens of the amazing "Robots in Disguise"—TRANSFORMERS! A new concept in toy development had arrived in the West, and nothing would ever be the same again.

Essentially, TRANSFORMERS were two toys in one. They were robots that, with a few twists and turns, became cars, jet fighters, trucks, weapons and, in one notable case, a radio-cassette player (complete with mini-TRANSFORMER tapes!). But what made these new toys stand out was that each pack came complete with detailed information on the character: his strengths and weaknesses, aims and ideals. And more... a whole back-story detailed a civil war on the metal planet of Cybertron, sweeping intergalactic combat, sudden disaster, and a dramatic reawakening on Earth. Heroic Autobots, led by noble Optimus Prime, pitted themselves against Megatron's evil Decepticons! For a generation nurtured on *Star Wars* and *Battlestar Galactica*, it was just the ticket.

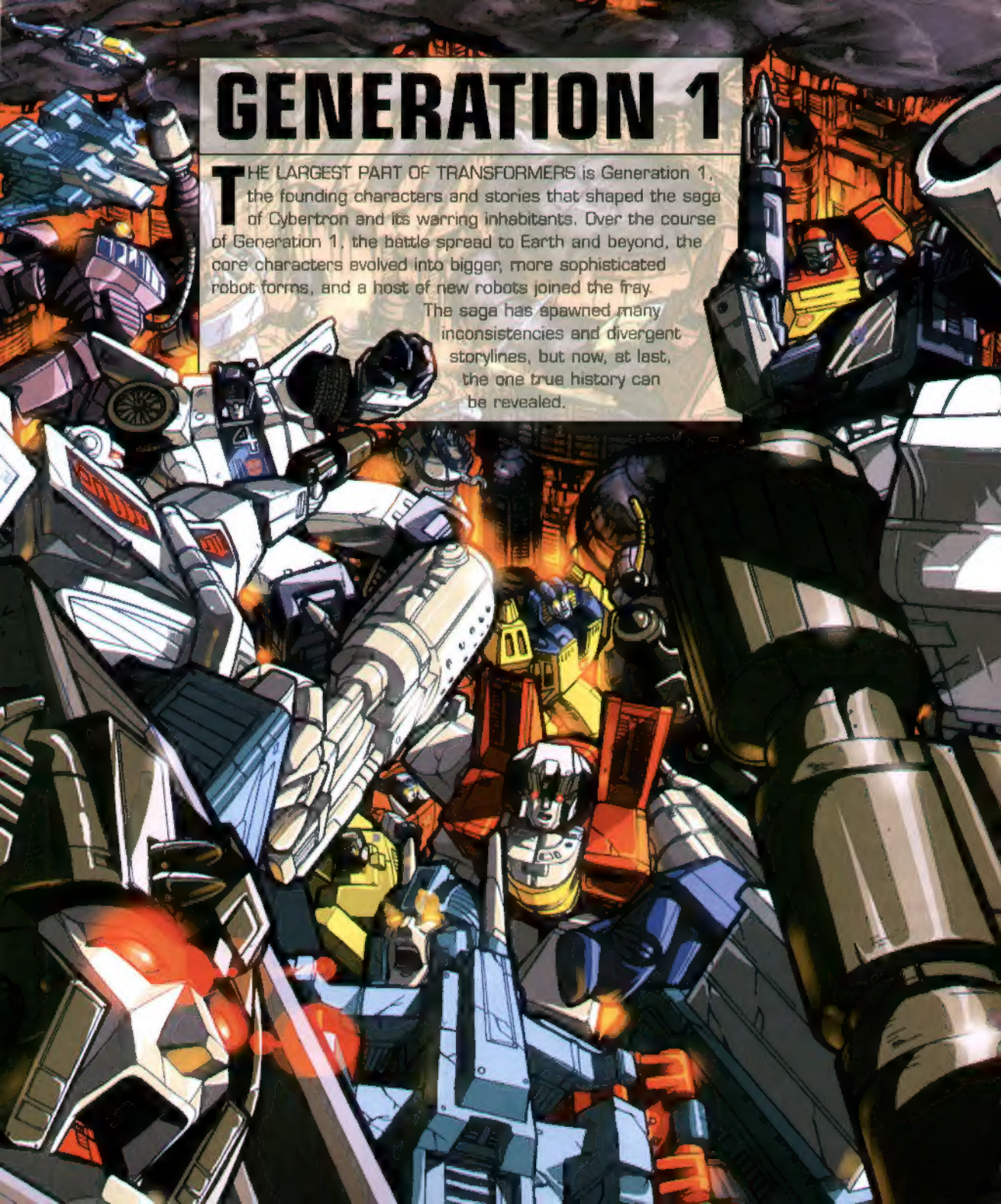
In fact, in Japan, transforming robot toys were nothing new. The TRANSFORMERS line was initially modeled on existing molds and characters from Takara, a major Japanese toy manufacturer, reissued under license by Hasbro in the United States and elsewhere. Hasbro developed the larger concepts, including character names and biographies, in collaboration with the U.S. comics publisher, Marvel (and in particular writer/editor Bob Budiansky), paving the way for a comic-book series and animated TV show, both of which proved hugely popular.

My involvement began in 1985. Marvel Comics' UK subsidiary had launched its own TRANSFORMERS title, and, while it largely reprinted stories from the US comic, the necessity soon arose for UK-originated material. Enter novice scriptwriter stage left. My first TRANSFORMERS story, titled "The Enemy Within," was published in March 1985, and one way or another I've been involved in the evolving world of TRANSFORMERS ever since.
In fact, the truly amazing thing about TRANSFORMERS is that it has endured for such a long time. It's come and gone, sure, but it keeps reinventing itself for a new generation, at the same time keeping fans who grew up with the series completely involved.

TRANSFORMERS in the 21st century is as strong as it has ever been, with new concepts, new toys, new comics, a new TV show, and a huge fanbase that tracks and discusses each new development on a host of dedicated websites, or journeys from far and wide to sprawling conventions. Prepare to be amazed all over again....

– Simon Furman

POLICE
4
PATROL



GENERATION 1

THE LARGEST PART OF TRANSFORMERS is Generation 1, the founding characters and stories that shaped the saga of Cybertron and its warring inhabitants. Over the course of Generation 1, the battle spread to Earth and beyond, the core characters evolved into bigger, more sophisticated robot forms, and a host of new robots joined the fray.

The saga has spawned many inconsistencies and divergent storylines, but now, at last, the one true history can be revealed.

CYBERTRON

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

LONG BEFORE THE most primitive life-forms crawled out of the primordial sludge on Earth, the world of Cybertron orbited a binary star in the Alpha Centauri system. Gleaming like a finely tooled machine part, its streamlined metallic surfaces, canyons, and structures were home to the TRANSFORMERS sentient robotic beings of vast intellect and amazing alternate-mode abilities. But Cybertron itself was far more than just a random quirk of cosmic evolution. At its heart lay a dormant consciousness—the heart and soul of a living being, forged when the Universe was still in its infancy. In reality, the entire planet of Cybertron was Primus, Lord of Light.

The Neutral Territories: free settlement zone and trading quadrant

Urara, largest of the Ten Peninsular Torus States, with Protihex and Praxus

Kalis: area of primary ore processing facilities and energon storage pits

Altihex: site of observatories and deep-space research communities

The Border Regions: subdistricts of Iacon and site of the Forum of Enlightenment, site of public rallies and meetings

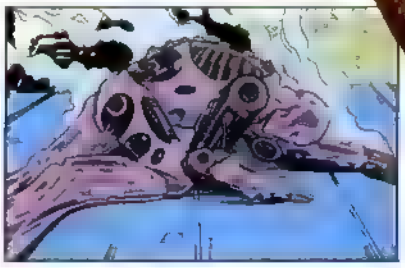
Kaon, southern polar state, the Badlands

PLANETARY HISTORY

Primus was created at the dawn of time from the life-sustaining Matrix of Leadership by his twin brother, Unicron. Taking a planet for his body, Primus explored the expanding universe and created many worlds. Each of these bodies was blessing Unicron's insidious and destructive rage. Primus took up arms against his former "brother." Their cosmic battles raged across the eons.

Evolution

In order to counter the threat of Unicron, Primus further enhanced his chosen mode. First, he created two planetary turbines, which powered him across the vast gulfs of space. Then he brought into existence a crew of 13 sentient beings that would guide and maintain his vast form. These first TRANSFORMERS were destroyed in a climactic battle with Unicron, which saw the chaos-bringer sucked through a black hole and into another dimension. With Unicron contained, Primus positioned itself in orbit around a binary star and withdrew to the very core of its planet-mode, allowing subsequent generations of TRANSFORMERS—each imbued with a tiny fragment, or Spark, of Primus' power—to spread across the planet, newly named Cybertron, and develop fully as a race.



Molded from the living skin of the planet and imbued with a fragment of Primus' own Spark, the first TRANSFORMER—named Prima—answers his creator's urgent call to arms!

Hub capital locus: the planetary seat of government

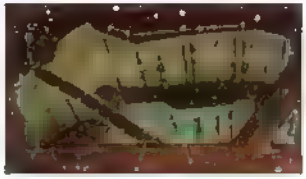
Nova Cronum: a philosophical haven and site of theoretical research facilities

THE WELL OF ALL SPARKS

Through its guardian Alpha Trion, [illegible] Well of All Sparks [illegible]

Polyhex: satellite control and Cybertron network command hub

The Tagon Heights Industrial Quadrant East: area of solar power stations

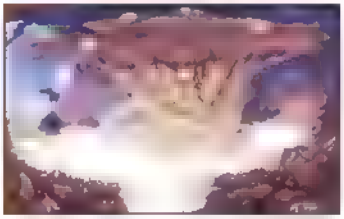


THE SONIC CANYONS

[illegible] (see page [illegible])

The Rust Sea: area of unstable planetary matter and molecular flux

Hydrax Plateau: primary spaceport and visitor processing



KAON

Unicron's evil [illegible] TRANSFORMERS [illegible] could not. Kaon was [illegible] Cybertronian [illegible] contamination that would ultimately [illegible]

Tyrest: site of ancillary mental processors and magnetic field dampers

Sonic Canyons: core deep, resonating tympanic chasms

THE CITY OF IACON

SCIENCE AND MYSTICISM COLLIDE IN THE TRANSFORMERS' CAPITAL CITY

The Torus States

Iacon

Kaon

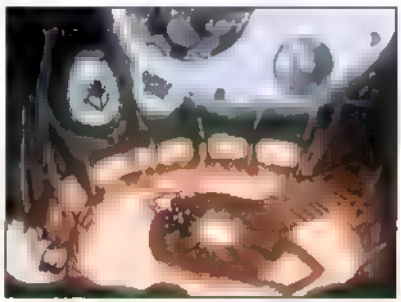
Orbital Torus States

With Iacon as its Hub Capital, the Orbital Torus States, such as Uraya, Kalis and Polyhex, radiate out in a concentric interlocking jigsaw-puzzle pattern, giving the planet its unique patchwork appearance when viewed from outer space.

CYBERTRON'S HUB-CAPITAL, Iacon, extends across the planet's northern polar region. When Cybertronian society began to flourish in the golden age, Iacon was founded and established as the primary seat of government. High science and ancient mysticism merged seamlessly around and throughout its gleaming towers and domes, underpinning the dreams and ambitions of this new race. Though much of the planet's history had become lost, a few older TRANSFORMERS formed the High Council with the goal to preserve Primus' guiding intent of a vast, unified world inhabited by a species dedicated to universal peace.

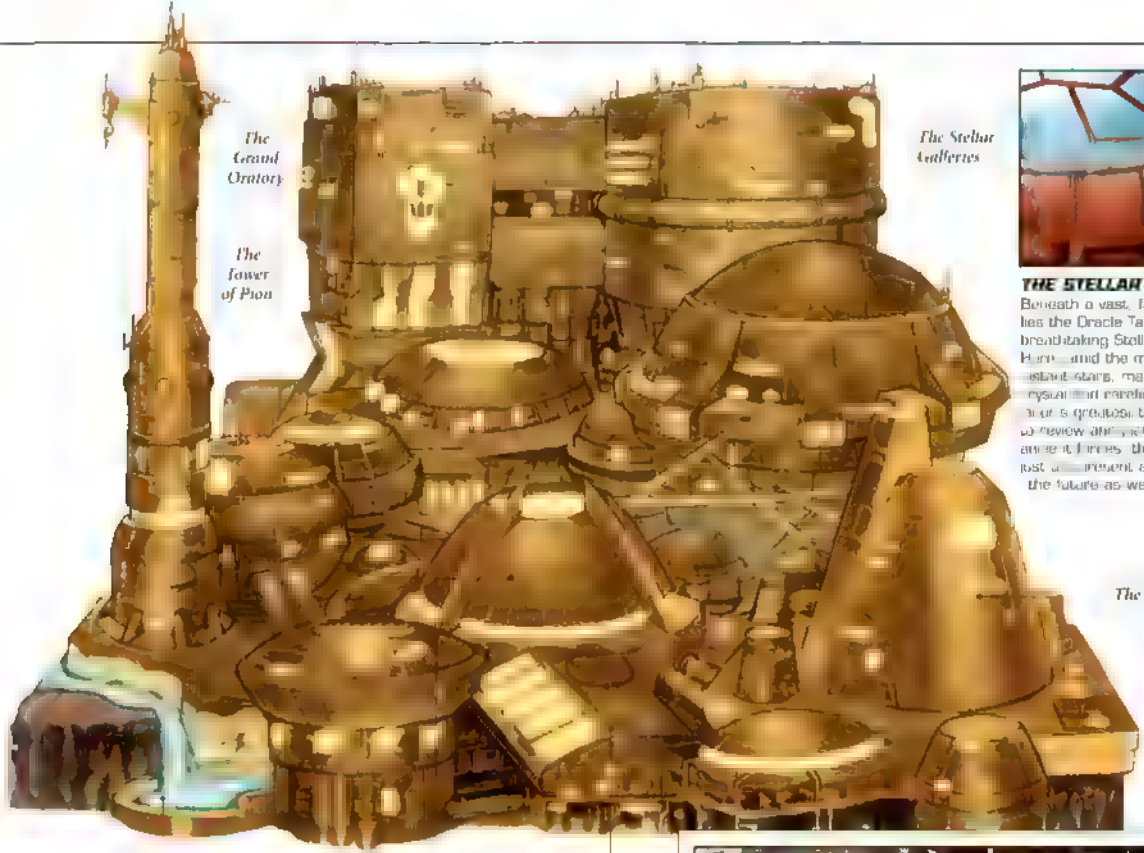
CHAMBER OF ANCIENTS

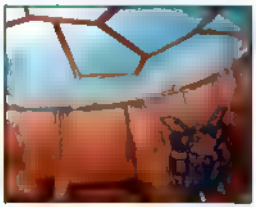
Sworn to protect Cybertron's ancient heritage, the High Council [illegible] the guardians of the Vector Sigma Matrix, a computer mainframe [illegible] directly to their creator's [illegible] deep within the planet. Housed within the Chamber of Ancients, the vast Matrix Mainframe guides the destiny of the TRANSFORMER race. The High Council [illegible] Vector Sigma on matters of [illegible] and law, or when a new leader or [illegible] is to be [illegible]



The High Council Pavilions

Central Spaceport





THE STELLAR GALLERIES

Beneath a vast, facated dome lies the Oracle Tank, part of the breathtaking Stellar Galleries. Here, amid the majesty of distant stars, magnified through crystal and candle glasses, [illegible] gather to review ancient [illegible]. Drawing on these [illegible], they chart not just the present and past, but the future as well.

THE HIGH COUNCIL PAVILIONS

Dominating Iacon's skyline, the High Council Pavilions house the remains of Cybertron's ancient heritage, as well as those who guard them. From the cavernous Chamber of Ancients to the epic Tower of Pion, these buildings are testament to the driving ambitions of Primus' race, and house the primary seats of government and learning. Planetary security and defenses are controlled from the fortress-like Decagon on the western perimeter.

Maccadams Old Oil House

Less secular pursuits are the order of the day at Maccadams, located due east of the High Council Pavilions. High-quality oil is on the menu, and all grudges must be checked at the door. It's rumored that the mysterious and rarely seen manager is one of the original 13 TRANSFORMERS, and that the bar itself exists out of normal space and time—mind you, Maccadams does serve exceptionally pure oil.

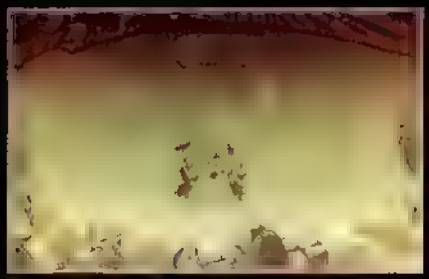
CIVIL WAR

THINGS FALL APART...

UNKNOWN TO THE High Council, a viper existed in Cybertron's Eden, a malevolent force patiently gathering strength and support, readying an army for an uprising and all-out war. Megatron and his Decepticon forces, their alternate modes stripped down and reconfigured as machines of war, soon trampled underfoot the peaceful ideals of Primus.

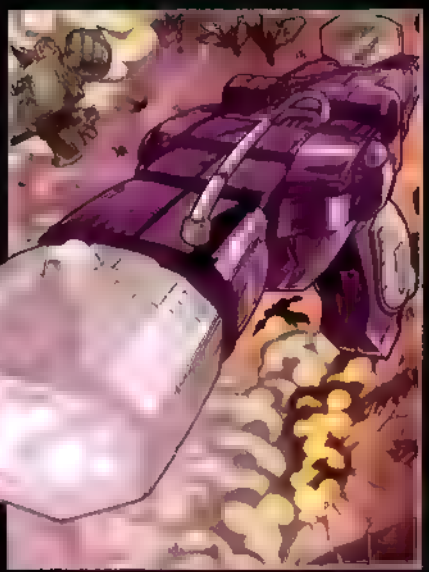
Opening sorties by the Decepticons razed huge areas of the planet, and Kaon (long their secret base of operations) declared its independence.

A response was mustered by a dedicated group of Cybertronians calling themselves Autobots. But where the Decepticons had been planning and training for years, the Autobots had not.



THE ARENA

Before the outbreak of civil war, forbidden combats were staged in secret underground arenas, TRANSFORMER pitted against TRANSFORMER, often to the death. These gladiatorial conflicts served Megatron well, identifying those, like him, who craved battle above all else.



DECLARATION

Only the strongest and deadliest were allowed into Megatron's inner Decepticon circle. Once recruited, they were indoctrinated and, if necessary, reconfigured and made ready for war. Then, on the Stasis Day of Cycle 11010, the Decepticons struck on multiple fronts. Unprepared, unversed in the ways of war, many chose not to resist. They pleaded for mercy, only to find that Megatron had none to give!

Transformed by the power of the Matrix, Optimus Prime steps up to lead the Autobots.

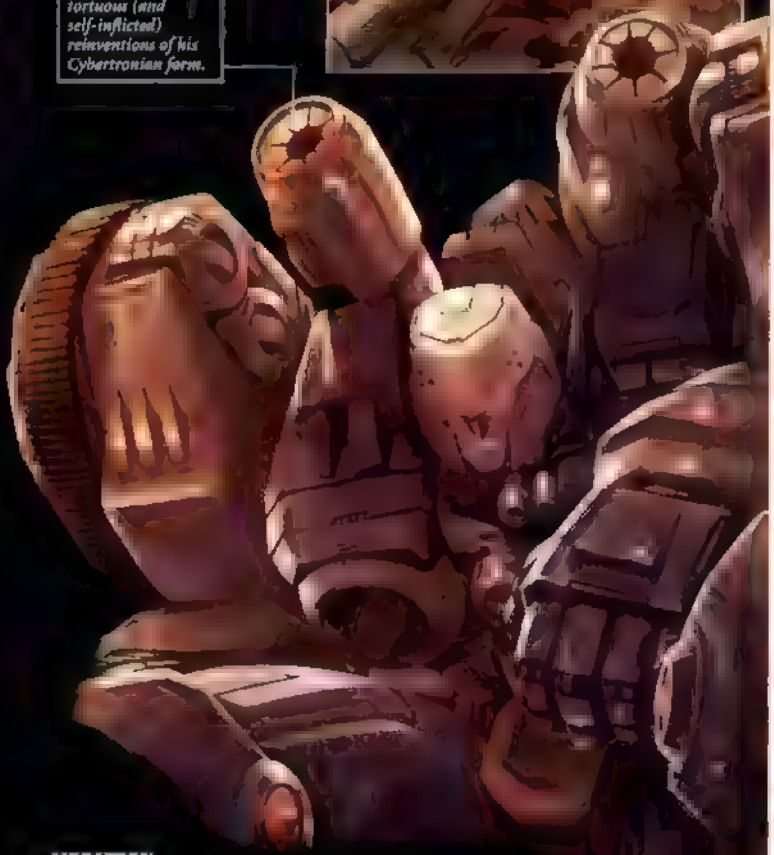
OPTIMUS PRIME

Some Cybertronians—calling themselves Autobots—chose to fight back, rallied by their leader, Sentinel Prime. When Megatron killed Sentinel Prime on the battlefields of Tyrest, the Matrix was passed to the next incumbent. Previously unaware of his destiny, a lowly records clerk called Optronix was asked to step up and receive the Matrix of Leadership. He was transformed into Optimus Prime, a force for good to rival Megatron himself.

SENTINEL PRIME

Sentinel Prime was one of a dynasty of Primes, stretching back to the original 13 TRANSFORMERS and their leader, Prime. Each Prime carried within him not only a Spark, but also a life-giving power source called the Matrix, the undiluted essence of Primus himself. The Matrix could be utilized not only to imbue new creations with Sparks, but also to repair and reinvigorate those critically injured on the battlefield. But its power is not limitless, and would only be used in special circumstances, at the discretion of the Prime. The Matrix also serves as a window into the past... or the future.

Megatron's cyclopean appearance was the result of many tortuous (and self-inflicted) reinventions of his Cybertronian form.



MEGATRON

While others fitted easily into Primus' grand plan of a unified, peace-loving race, Megatron most definitely did not. He saw the mass of Cybertronians as weak, wasting their race's potential. He knew with utter certainty that the Decepticons were destined to rule, to spread their might beyond the confines of Cybertronian space.

TIMELINE

Many [illegible] years the Cybertronian civil war stretched [illegible] a vast pall of time, the forces of both factions [illegible] dramatically.

8 MILLION YEARS BG1*

Megatron gathers his forces [illegible] secret planning a planet-wide uprising [illegible] exploitation of Cybertron's vast planetary turbines.

8.7 MILLION YEARS BG1

Kaon is one of the first cities to fall in a series of lightning strikes by the Decepticon forces. Wa[illegible]ually destroyed.

8.5 MILLION YEARS BG1

[illegible] first Autobot victory [illegible] Polyhex. Across Cybertron, the resistance movement [illegible] forces. The Decepticons are Now Ground[illegible]

8.2 MILLION YEARS BG1

The [illegible] of Sentinel Prime, Optimus Prime becomes [illegible] guardian of the Matrix. Plans for a mass Autobot exodus are [illegible]

7.4–6.5 MILLION YEARS BG1

[illegible]n is Prime and Megatron vanish. The Dark Ages begin. The [illegible] one of [illegible] 3 stories in the Bonus War [illegible] Rise of the Spychangers.

[illegible] MILLION YEARS BG1

Megatron [illegible] [illegible] with the Quintessons [illegible] [illegible]. Autobot forces surrender at Tyger Pax. [illegible] begins.

5 MILLION YEARS BG1

Forces [illegible] seemingly [illegible] [illegible] with [illegible] [illegible] supplies. Many Autobots leave Cybertron in search [illegible] new energy sources.

4 MILLION YEARS BG1

Cybertronians [illegible] [illegible] to planetary stability and [illegible] [illegible] the construction [illegible] the giant starship The Ark.

3.5 MILLION YEARS BG1

The Big Bad [illegible] Cybertron [illegible] a dimensional [illegible] which [illegible] [illegible] to [illegible] its previous war [illegible].

*BG1 = Before Generation 1 [illegible] before the TRANSFORMERS [illegible] [illegible] Earth.

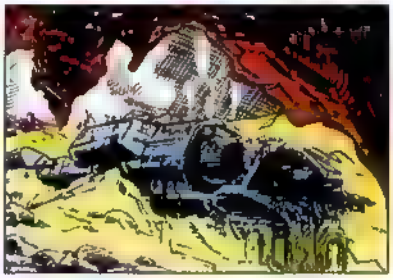
THE ARK

A THREAT FROM SPACE

AS WELL AS having to contend with a seemingly endless civil war, Autobot scientists gravely reported a new menace. A massive asteroid, composed of dense rock and metal, was on a direct collision course with Cybertron. To counter the threat, a giant spacecraft was designed and built. Dubbed the Ark, its mission was to reach the asteroid first and use its devastating weaponry to smash it into smaller pieces. A crew of Autobot warriors, led by Optimus Prime, set off, unaware that Megatron was lying in wait.

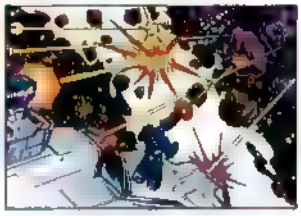
ASSAULT ON THE ARK

As soon as the Ark had successfully reduced the rogue asteroid to rubble, Megatron struck, attacking the Ark in his own spacecraft, *Nemesis*. Taken by surprise, their weapons seriously depleted, the Autobots fought back as best they could, but the Ark was breached and boarded. Out of control, the Ark flew directly into one of the Space Bridge portals (followed by *Nemesis*), reappearing in another galaxy, far from Cybertron.



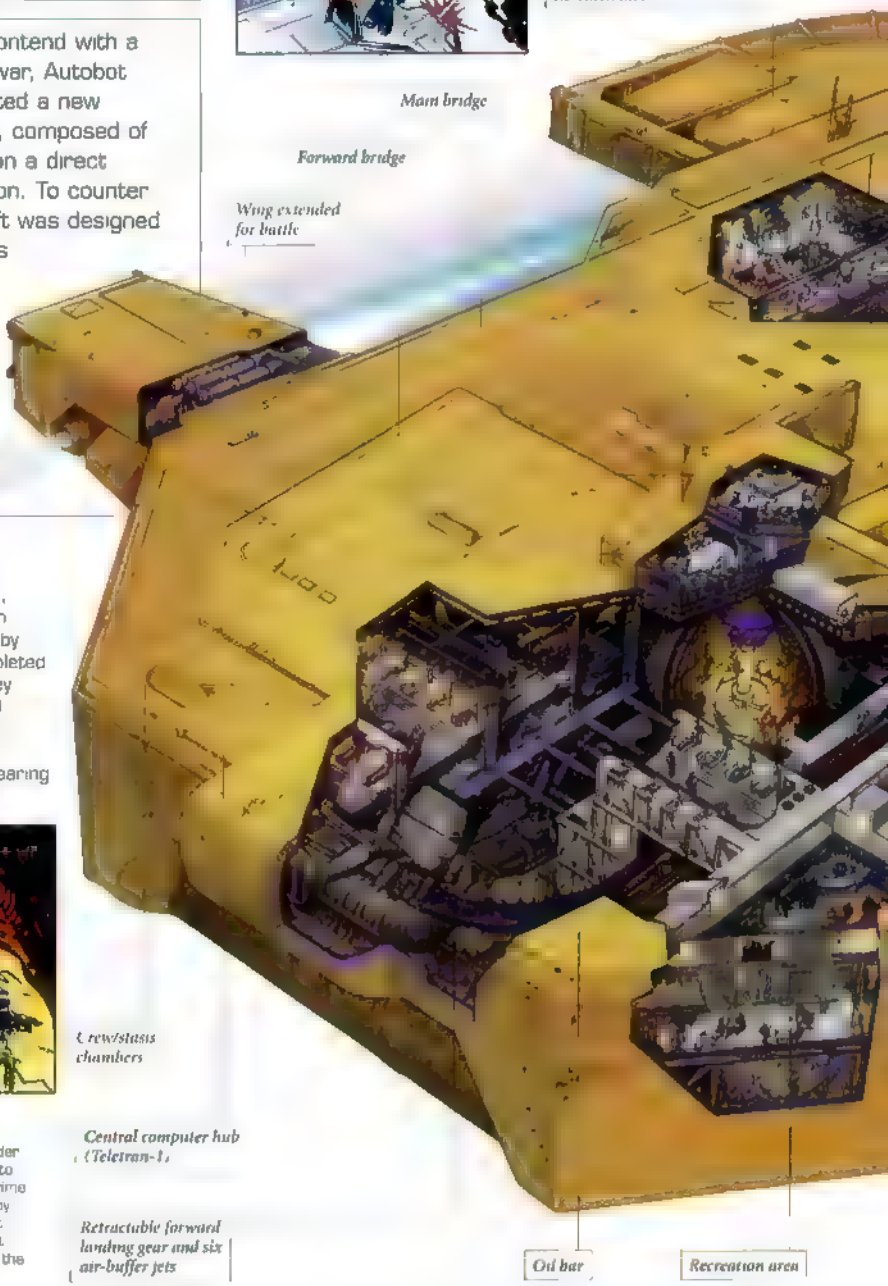
CRASH-LANDING

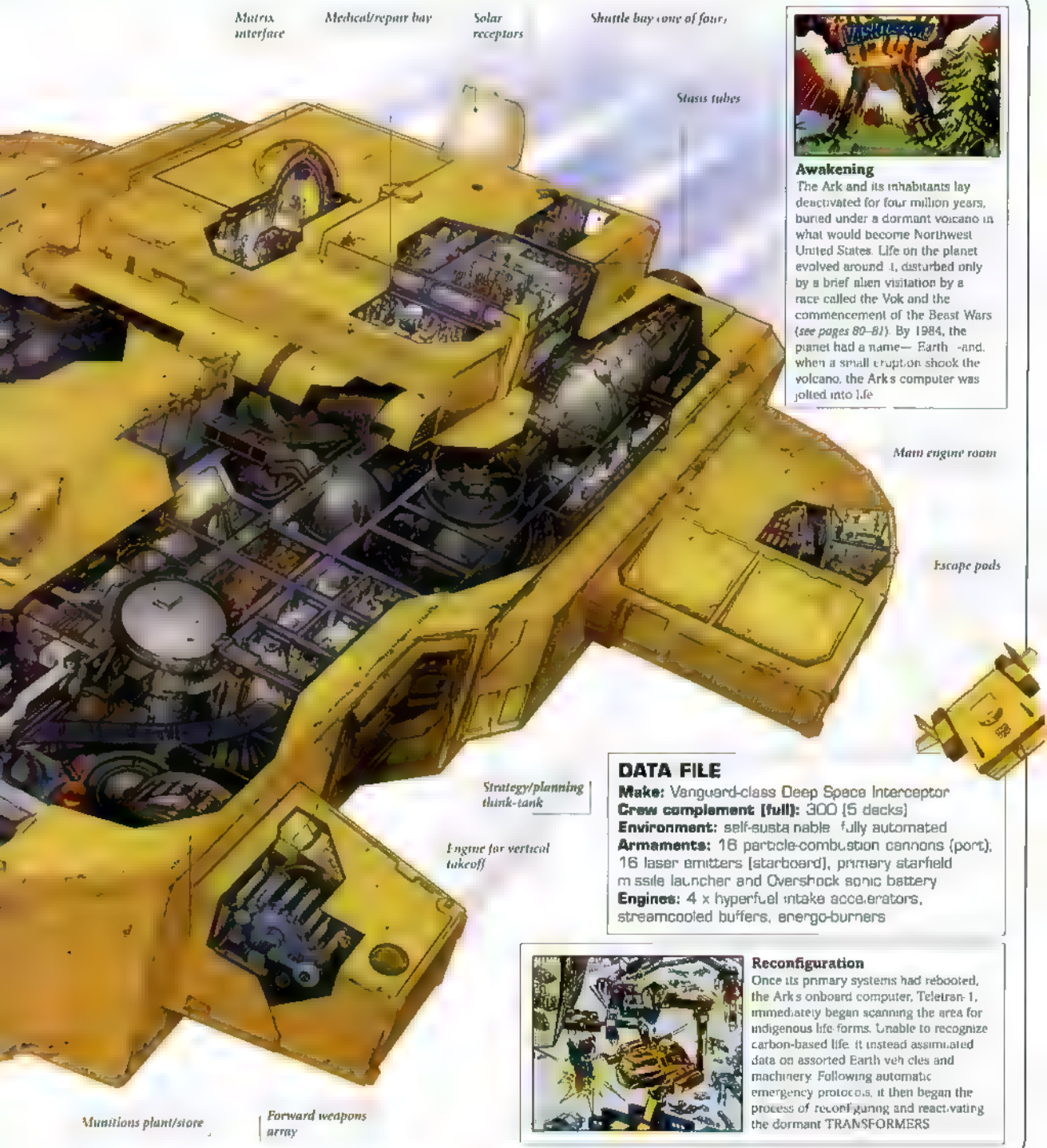
Aboard the Ark, the battle slowly but surely turned against the Autobots. Knowing that under no circumstances could Megatron be allowed to possess the Ark and its weaponry, Optimus Prime immediately set a collision course with a nearby planet. Before Megatron could react, the craft entered the upper atmosphere and, a moment later, smashed through layers of solid rock on the planet's surface.



BREAKING ROCKS

The Autobots' plan was to break up the asteroid into fragments that would be more readily absorbed by an orbital Space Bridge network and transported safely to the far reaches of space.





Awakening

The Ark and its inhabitants lay deactivated for four million years, buried under a dormant volcano in what would become Northwest United States. Life on the planet evolved around it, disturbed only by a brief alien visitation by a race called the Vok and the commencement of the Beast Wars (*see pages 80–81*). By 1984, the planet had a name— Earth —and, when a small eruption shook the volcano, the Ark's computer was jolted into life.

DATA FILE

Make: Vanguard-class Deep Space Interceptor
Crew complement (full): 300 (5 decks)
Environment: self-sustainable, fully automated
Armaments: 16 particle-combustion cannons (port), 16 laser emitters (starboard), primary starfield missile launcher and Overshock sonic battery
Engines: 4 x hyperfuel intake accelerators, streamcooled buffers, energo-burners

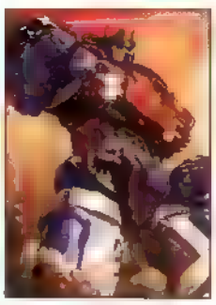
Reconfiguration

Once its primary systems had rebooted, the Ark's onboard computer, Teletran-1, immediately began scanning the area for indigenous life-forms. Unable to recognize carbon-based life, it instead assimilated data on assorted Earth vehicles and machinery. Following automatic emergency protocols, it then began the process of reconfiguring and reactivating the dormant TRANSFORMERS.

OPTIMUS PRIME

FOR THE LEADER OF THE AUTOBOTS, "FREEDOM IS THE RIGHT OF ALL SENTIENT BEINGS."

FORGED IN THE fires of civil war and pitted against the ultimate evil, Optimus Prime is the epitome of the Autobot ideals of courage, virtue, and integrity. Strong, wise, and utterly unswerving in his quest to conquer evil and protect life in all its forms, his leadership has forged the Autobots into a mighty force for justice and liberty. But it wasn't always so. The Optimus Prime who first took up arms was full of doubt, unsure if Cybertron was worth saving at all. His first act was to order a planetwide evacuation, but his subsequent (and first) battle with Megatron convinced him that he had a duty not just to those under his command but to the Universe as a whole!



CYBERTRONIAN MODE

In his original configuration, Optimus Prime's alternate mode was an 18-wheeler gleaming red vehicle with secondary battle platform, pod unit, and forward ramming bars.

Enhanced neural pathways and full sensory net allow increased multi-aspect visual/auditory acuity and reduced reaction time

Matrix supply nodes

Audio booster box and internal comm. system

Polarized, magno-dipped tungsten casing

Matrix chest cavity/Matrix of Leadership

Secondary computer systems/memory storage and uplink data ports

Transformation locking bars and hydraulic shaft infrastructure

Wrist and hand lock/unlock mechanism

Shielded spark chamber extract view

Alternate pressurized fuel receptors

Turbo-vented superstructure

Earth Mode

Recreated on Earth by Teletran 1, Optimus Prime's [illegible] Earth mode is a [illegible] primary [illegible] and [illegible] with [illegible] and [illegible] with [illegible] [illegible]

WEAPONRY

Relying more on sheer strength and awe-inspiring presence than battle-hardened hardware, Prime nevertheless carries a powerful laser cannon rifle which [illegible] by his amazing visual acuity can target and bring down a Decepticon jet at a distance of up to 30 miles, 48 kilometers, with a single [illegible] shot.

Enhanced shock distribution system for high altitude drop impact absorption

Plasma burners for assisted lift and ultraspeed response/attack

Vehicle-mode brake/running lights

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Strength almost beyond measure [illegible] a veritable storehouse of wisdom and knowledge, it's easy to assume that Optimus Prime has no weaknesses. Unfortunately, that's just not true. Damage to one of his secondary modules can seriously debilitate Prime himself. But his primary weakness, indeed, qualifies his compassion, even for his enemies. A great strategist, inspirational leader, thinker even in the heat of battle, the only thing Prime lacks is a ruthless edge: the ability to truly fight fire with fire. But his capacity for mercy, for looking for the best in everyone, is what makes him who he is.

MEGATRON

THE LEADER OF THE DECEPTICONS CRIES: "PEACE THROUGH TYRANNY."

COLD, CRUEL, CALCULATING... Megatron is all these things and much more. Even those closest to him see only a fragment of his true nature. Not for nothing did Megatron choose the name Decepticon: his every move or plan is a bluff wrapped in deceit, forever masking his true intent. For Megatron, it was never just about defeating the Autobots or reigning supreme over Cybertron. His agenda was more far-reaching than mere conquest. He planned to turn Cybertron itself into a vast war planet, and use it to spread his tyranny across the galaxy.

Transdimensional weapons uplink and mass displacement interface

Backup cannon on rolling track assembly; main junction points for secondary extensions

Subsurface tri-polymer musculature and cranial sensors

Forearm hydraulics, primary internal fuel lines, and subsystems

Variable-output sensors

Spark chamber and fission core, feedback coils

Primary fusion cannon and reaction chamber

Shock absorbers and secondary impact dampers

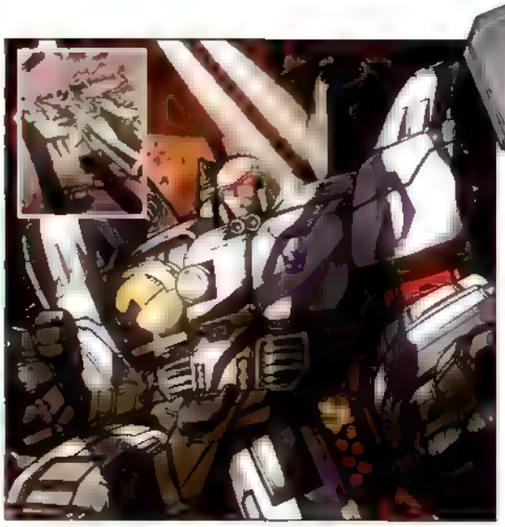
Impacted gravity-folded alloy casing

Energon converters, reserve fuel cells, and full leg hydraulics

Thunderpad dampers for stealth approach

WEAPONRY

Immensely powerful and keenly intelligent, Megatron is a formidable foe, and a master. Megatron rules through fear, and woe betide any who dare to challenge him. He is himself a weapon. However, in robot mode he can combine with weapon extensions to form a particle beam cannon and a telescopic laser.



CYBERTRONIAN MODE

In his original Hyper-Tank mode, Megatron was a rolling battle station, a one-robot engine of destruction. Not one to hide behind his troops, Megatron would often lead from the front, blasting and battering his way through any defenses. Multiple concussion cannons, artillery launchers and particle beam accelerators made his personal arsenal second to none.

Earth Mode

Megatron can downgrade his overall mass and size into a handheld gun in Earth mode, concealing his massive destructive potential. Though more contained and accurate in small gun mode, a single blast can still atomize an enemy.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

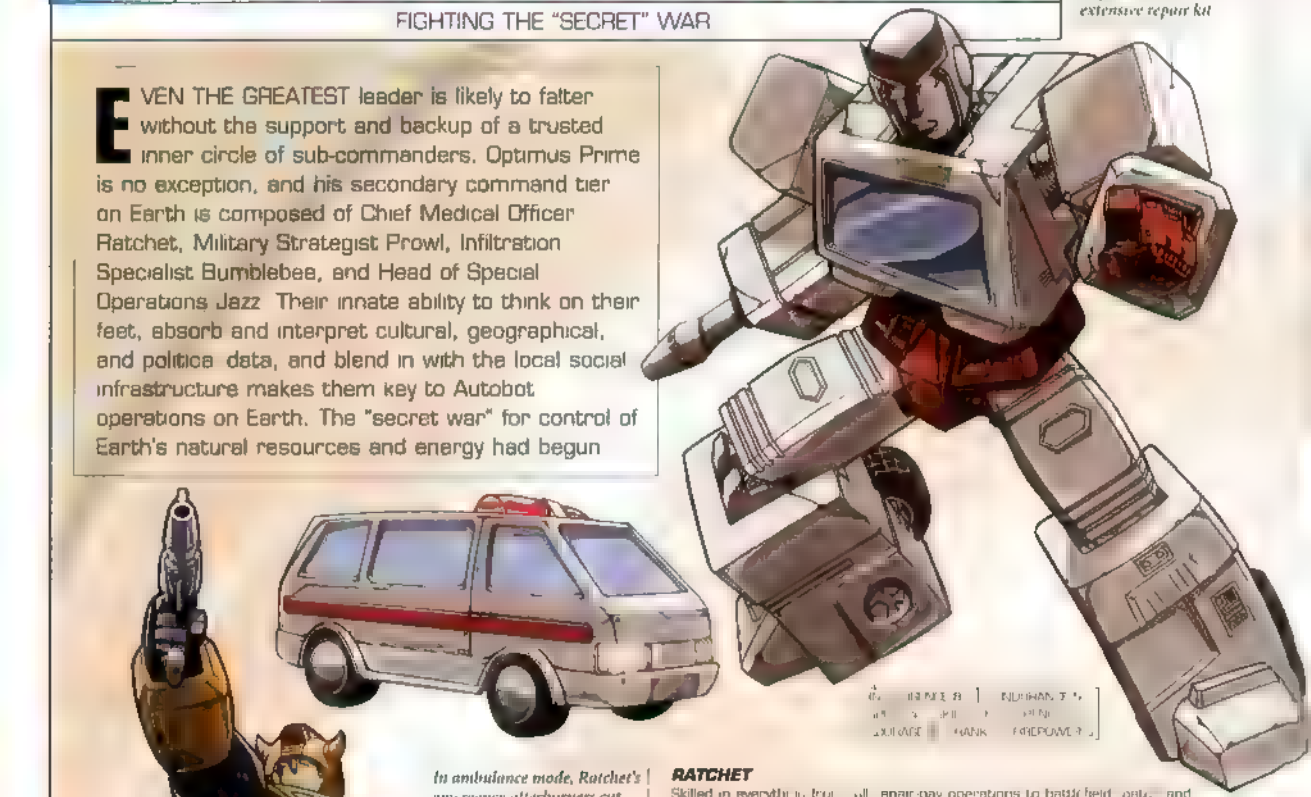
No one has yet managed to measure or determine the exact upper limit of Megatron's power, be it his strength and durability in robot mode or his massive, destructive firepower in either mode. In robot mode, his arm-mounted fusion cannon can (interdimensionally) tap energy from the heart of a black hole, channeling it into a blast capable of shattering mountains. An expert in hand-to-hand combat, battle strategy, and combat techniques, resistant to all forms of physical damage and fatigue, Megatron has virtually no known weaknesses.

AUTOBOT OFFICERS

FIGHTING THE "SECRET" WAR

EVEN THE GREATEST leader is likely to falter without the support and backup of a trusted inner circle of sub-commanders. Optimus Prime is no exception, and his secondary command tier on Earth is composed of Chief Medical Officer Ratchet, Military Strategist Prowl, Infiltration Specialist Bumblebee, and Head of Special Operations Jazz. Their innate ability to think on their feet, absorb and interpret cultural, geographical, and political data, and blend in with the local social infrastructure makes them key to Autobot operations on Earth. The "secret war" for control of Earth's natural resources and energy had begun

Robot mode features laser scalpels, arc welders, fluid dispensers, and an extensive repair kit



In ambulance mode, Ratchet's emergency afterburners cut down on response time

RATCHET

Skilled in everything from all-hazard operations to battlefield medic and weld... Chief Medical Officer Ratchet prides his own deeply caring nature behind tipped missiles and plasma cannons. He knows that its effectiveness would be compromised should he allow himself to get too close to those he may simply not be able to save one day. He is, however a consummate professional—resourceful and utterly committed to saving lives. Ratchet all too often sees the full terrible cost of war.

Particle decelerator slows down opponents reaction times

Robot mode features good vision but a low level of armor

Secondary mode can also adapt to deep sea travel

BUMBLEBEE

...ar from being a drawback, Bumblebee's diminutive size is his greatest asset. He goes where others can't, stealthily wreaking sensors and alarms designed for intruders much bigger and heavier, making him an ideal choice for covert ops/insertion missions. Wisecracking, brash and sometimes overconfident, Bumblebee is nevertheless cool and collected in a tight spot, seeing options and possibilities where none readily appear. If there's a weakness, it's that in combat situations he tries a little too hard, overcompensating for his lack of overall stature

JAZZ

Self-possessed, calm and utterly collected, Jazz is Head of Special Operations with his own decorated roster of agents. Yet he often gives the most dangerous assignments to himself. It's not a matter of ego – just really is the coolest head for the toughest missions. Jazz's ease extends to whatever environment he finds himself in, no matter how weird or wonderful. He effortlessly takes in the local culture, assimilating and improvising, and making creative use of said decisions.

In robot mode, Jazz targets and fires his photon rifle and shoulder mounted flamethrowers with unerring accuracy.

In vehicle mode, Jazz uses a full spectrum beacon and powerful speakers to produce a disorienting display

Prowl uses an advanced logic center to make immediate analyses in combat situations

Prowl's robot mode is armed with sidearm and shoulder mounted cannons

Prowl's vehicle mode features built in white noise amplifiers and reinforced superstructure.

Reserve fuel tanks can be used for extended pursuits

PROWL

As Optimus Prime's Second-in-Command, Prowl has occasionally taken over the leadership of the Autobot forces, but prefers his place at Prime's side. Logical, resourceful and patient, Prowl is the perfect military strategist. It takes a lawful lot for him to lose his cool. Sometimes, though, this makes for a certain distance and impersonal level, and a lack of flair and imagination in the professional front. Educated guesses and intelligent thinking are not his forte, and sometimes he really can't see the forest for the trees.

AUTOBOT TROOPERS

A CALL TO ARMS

ON CYBERTRON, they were traders and engineers architects and artists—but civil war changed all that, forcing them to take up arms to defend their homeworld from the marauding Decepticons. Many did so reluctantly. They were unversed in the ways of war and unwilling to shoot a fellow Cybertronian—no matter how radical their agenda—or knowingly harm any form of life. But they did take up arms and formed the heart and backbone of the Autobot army, learning the hard way that sometimes freedom must be fought for... and paid for in spilled oil. These dedicated Autobots fought on for millions of years, becoming battle-hardened and often embittered, but never losing sight of the dream of a glorious new era of peace and prosperity, when once again they could return to their former lives and loves.

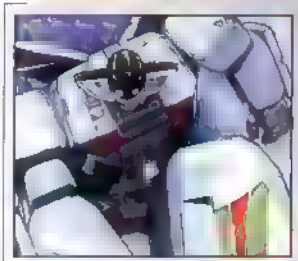
INTELLIGENCE 7		ENDURANCE 7	
SPEED 7	SKILL 6	STRENGTH 7	
COURAGE 10	RANK 5	FIREPOWER 3	

Sideswipe's arms act as powerful pile drivers, and his built-in rocket pack allows brief spells of solo flying time.

SIDESWIPE

Once a trader with few compunctions about who he could con with a smile and wink, Sideswipe took his civilian lessons onto the battlefield with the same reckless disregard. His undeniable flair for battle was counterbalanced by his tendency to disobey orders he didn't like, thereby endangering others who were relying on him. Time and hard lessons have changed Sideswipe, making him less cold-hearted and self-involved, more of a team player. But he still relishes staring down an opponent, . and seeing the fight through to the bitter end.

In vehicle mode, Sideswipe can reach speeds in excess of 300 mph (480 km/h).



Wheeljack

As an engineer, Wheeljack was instrumental in the design and construction of the Ark. He is constantly looking for ways to improve and refine the Autobots' weaponry, defensive systems, and fuel capacity. More comfortable in vehicle mode than in robot mode, Wheeljack does his best thinking in motion, and routinely performs amazing feats of vehicular prowess.

IRONHIDE

One of the oldest of the TRANSFORMERS still in active combat, Ironhide spent his prodigious years as a construction engineer fashioning the vast bridge spans that connected Cybertron's many city-states. The tough, no-nonsense hard-graft attitude that made him such a force to be reckoned with before the war now serves him well in battle. He prefers actions to words, never backing down from a challenge. He's old school and doesn't intend to change for anyone. Head of Security aboard the Ark, he continues these duties on Earth.

In vehicle mode, Ironhide has a secondary demolition configuration.

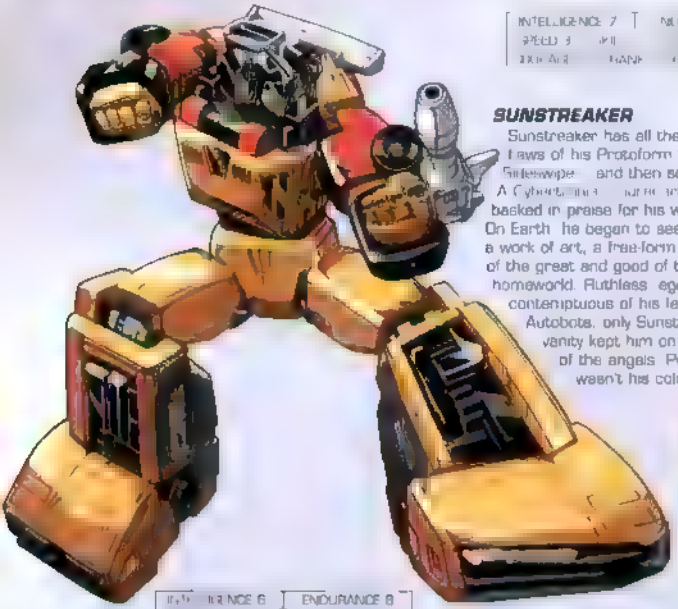
Shoulder-mounted, ground-to-air missile launchers

INTELLIGENCE 7 | ENDURANCE 9
SPEED 9 | SKILL 10 | STRENGTH 10
COURAGE 10 | RANK 10 | FIREPOWER 10

Trythallium steel lining protects against radiation and blast damage

SUNSTREAKER

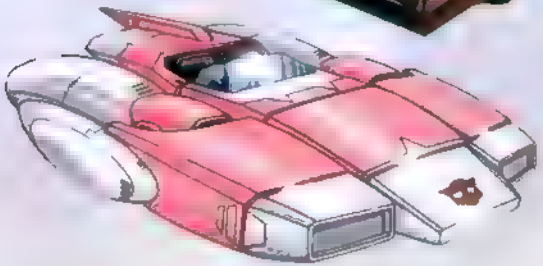
Sunstreaker has all the character flaws of his Protoform "brother" Sideswipe – and then some! A Cybertronian narcissist, he basked in praise for his work. On Earth, he began to see himself as a work of art, a free-form expression of the great and good of their homeworld. Ruthless, egotistical, contemptuous of his fellow Autobots, only Sunstreaker's vanity kept him on the side of the angels. Purple just wasn't his color!

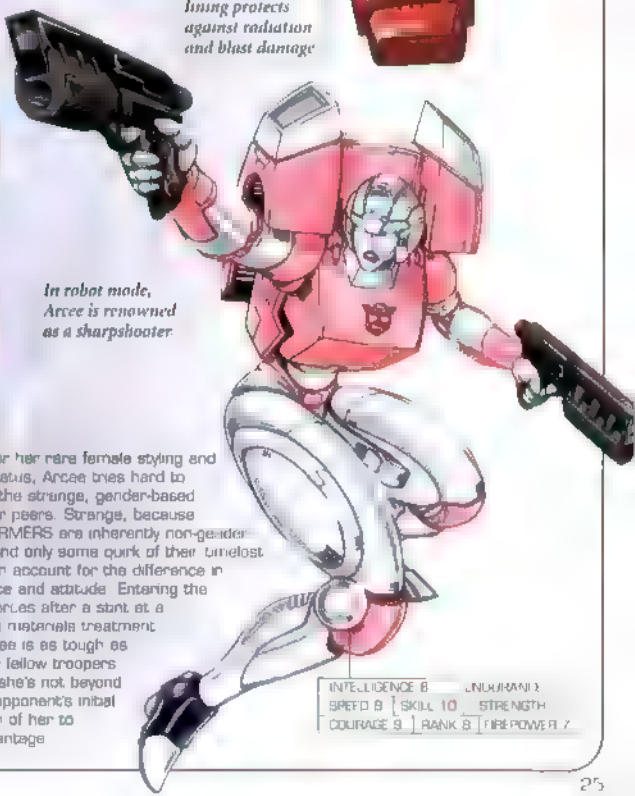


INTELLIGENCE 6 | ENDURANCE 8
SPEED 8 | SKILL 8 | STRENGTH 5
COURAGE 7 | RANK 5 | FIREPOWER 7

Sunstreaker's rear-cooled, fuel injection engines allow for a super-fast burn.

Arcee can attain sub-light speeds in vehicle mode.





In robot mode, Arcee is renowned as a sharpshooter.

ARCEE

Notable for her rare female styling and warrior status, Arcee tries hard to shrug off the strange, gender-based bias of her peers. Strange, because TRANSFORMERS are inherently non-gender specific, and only some quirk of their timelost origins can account for the difference in appearance and attitude. Entering the Autobot forces after a stint at a hazardous materials treatment plant, Arcee is as tough as any of her fellow troopers. However, she's not beyond using an opponent's initial perception of her to lethal advantage.

INTELLIGENCE 8 | ENDURANCE 9
SPEED 9 | SKILL 10 | STRENGTH 7
COURAGE 9 | RANK 8 | FIREPOWER 7

THE DECEPTICONS

THE LOGICAL THE MAD, AND THE THUGLY!

FROM THE CESSPOOLS of Cybertron's outlawed combat arenas, Megatron isolated the malcontents and the thugs—those with a certain moral ambiguity and passion (talent!) for destruction and violence. But, by its very nature, the pursuit of the lowest common denominator meant a certain amount of personal risk, a good chance that one or all might turn and bite the hand that fed. Fear was the answer. mental domination through punishment and scant reward Pain was the collar and leash by which Megatron bound his Decepticons. First, the arenas, in which only the fittest survived Then the Forge, in which each recruit's physical form was reconstructed And finally, the Branding Pit, and the searing mark of a Decepticon! But fear and pain can only go so far...

Shockwave's cannon arm draws power from a compact nuclear reactor housed in his torso.

SHOCKWAVE

Coldly logica and lacking in personal ambition or ego, Shockwave was at first the least of Megatron's concerns. Shockwave's sheer destructive power was tempered only by h s dispass onate approach. No blood lust, no battle rage—just the most effective and economic approach to any given scenario. Unfortunately for Megatron, Shockwave concluded that his leader's all-consuming passion for conquest was not the optimum solution—therefore, Megatron should be removed and Shockwave himself should lead the Decepticons
No mal ce
no ego, just
s mple logic

Cybertronian Space Gun mode

Insecticons

One of Megatron's first designated Earth subgroups was the Insecticons, an infiltration/observation unit configured with a knowing wink to local "bug" life-forms Bombshell has cerebro-shells that allow him to contro. another s mind, while Kickback can punch through solid steel and Shrapnel can attract and generate controlled bursts of electric current

Heat-seeking underwing missile launchers augment Skywarp's firepower in jet mode

Skywarp is armed with dual variable caliber machine gun pods

Starscream is one of the fastest of the jet mode Decepticons, able to reach speeds in excess of Mach 2.8.

Megatron in gun mode

Starscream's null ray rifle can immobilize robotic circuitry.

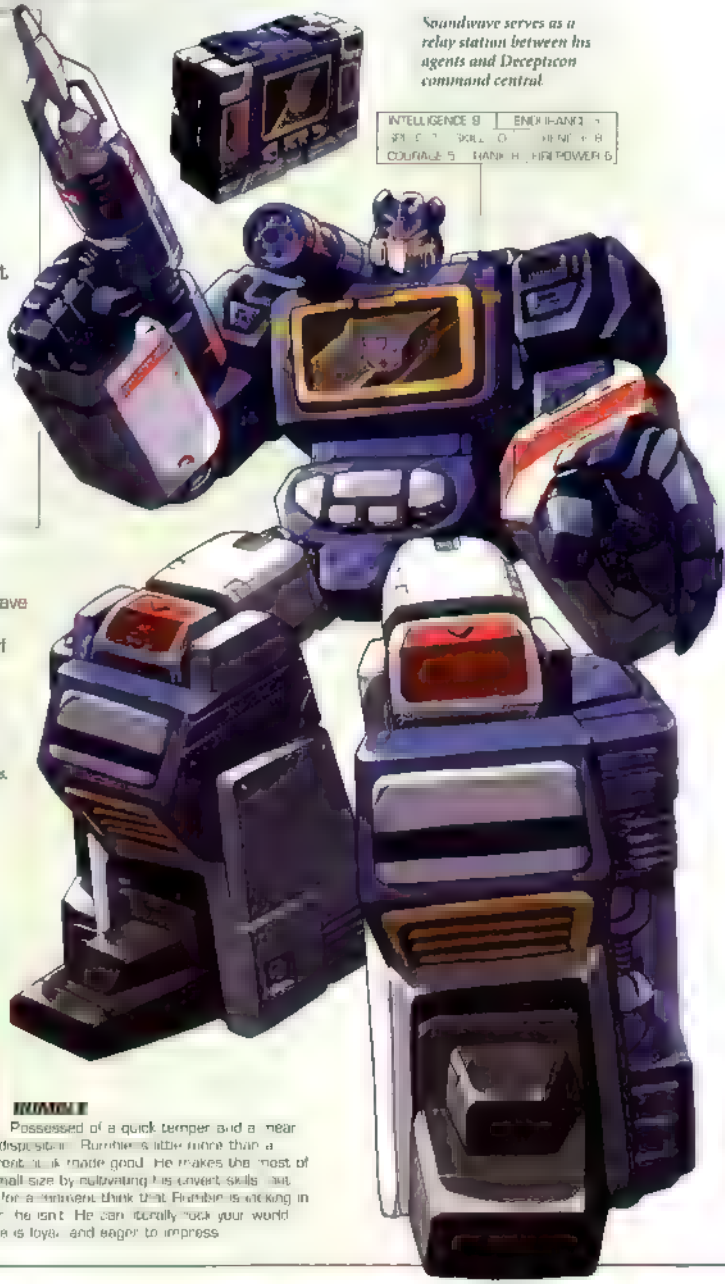
SKYWARP

News [illegible] head of Skywarp. Chances are [illegible] when you turn back [illegible] he's gone, and it's too late. You'll [illegible] Skywarp possesses [illegible] speeds [illegible] Skywarp's [illegible] to duplicate [illegible] Hence [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

SOUNDWAVE AND CO.

INFORMATION IS POWER!

ONE OF TELETRAN-1'S finest innovations was the re-creation on Earth of Megatron's loyal lieutenant and chief communications officer, Soundwave, and five mini-stealth warriors. Originally a covert infiltration team in their own right, the Decepticons who would become Soundwave's cassettes were masters of disguise (each possessing chameleon circuitry), and were adept at spying and recording. Teletran-1 used these mini-warriors as parts of an elaborate whole, designed to instantly transmit and receive intelligence across vast distances. The original five stealth warriors—Ravage, Rumble, Frenzy, Laserbeak, and Buzzsaw—became cassettes compatible with Soundwave's tape-deck mode. Now, no secret was safe, no whisper unheard.



Soundwave serves as a relay station between his agents and Decepticon command central.

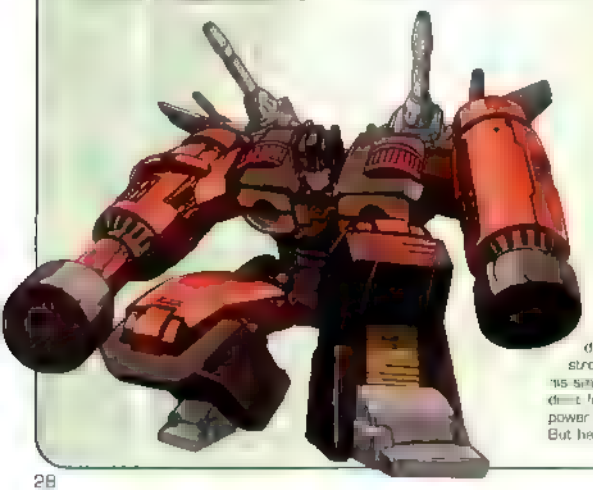
INTELLIGENCE 9 | ENDURANCE 7
COURAGE 5 | RANK 8 | FIREPOWER 6

SOUNDWAVE

One of a seemingly rare breed, Soundwave is utterly loyal to Megatron. Rarely speaking, but constantly listening, Soundwave is often the arbiter of good sense in heated debates. Yet he always keeps a part of what he hears and records to himself blackmail material in case his position should ever be threatened. Outside of his cassette entourage, nobody really likes Soundwave, and he doesn't care. Information is power!

INTELLIGENCE 5 | ENDURANCE 8
SPEED 5 | STRENGTH 4
COURAGE 5 | RANK 5 | FIREPOWER 5

Rumble's pile-driving forearms can generate seismic shock waves.

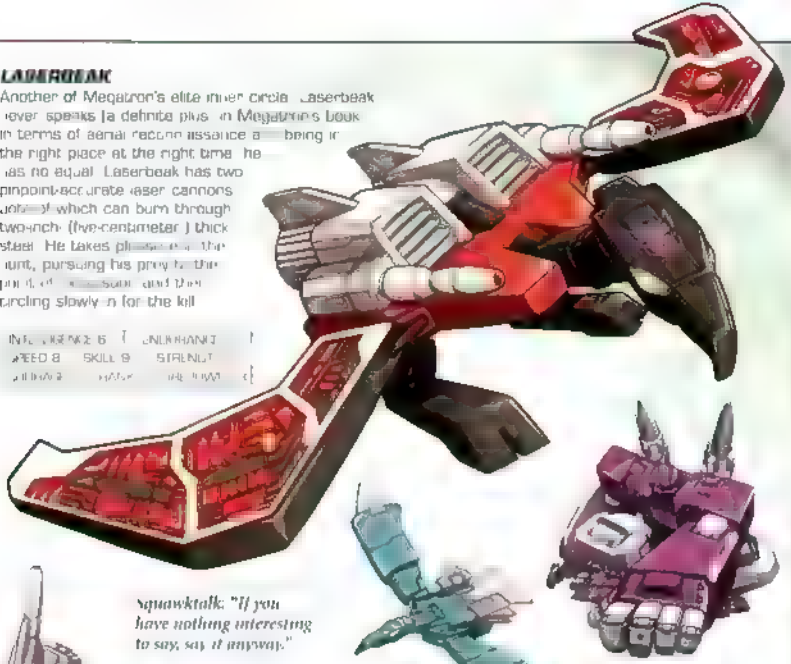


RUMBLE

Possessed of a quick temper and a near dyspeptic disposition, Rumble is little more than a street punk made good. He makes the most of his small size by cultivating his covert skills and, at least for a moment, think that Rumble is lacking in power; he isn't. He can literally rock your world. But he is loyal and eager to impress.

LASERBEAK

Another of Megatron's elite inner circle, Laserbeak never speaks (a definite plus in Megatron's book). In terms of aerial reconnaissance and being in the right place at the right time, he has no equal. Laserbeak has two pinpoint-accurate laser cannons, both of which can burn through two-inch- (five-centimeter-) thick steel. He takes pleasure in the hunt, pursuing his prey to the point of exhaustion and then circling slowly in for the kill.



Squawktalk: "If you have nothing interesting to say, say it anyway."

Beastbox: "Speak now if you intend to ever speak at all."

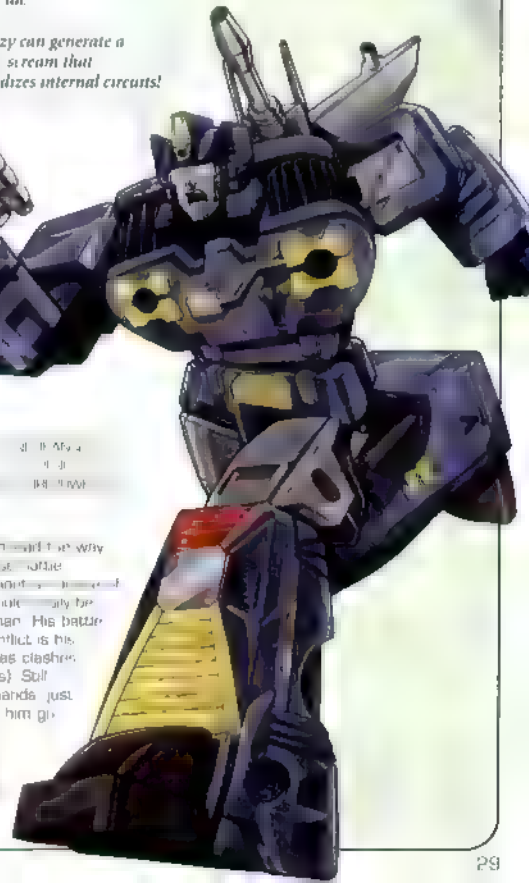
SQUAWKBOX

[illegible] Squawkbox [illegible] beast mode [illegible] Beastbox and Squawktalk to [illegible] Squawkbox. With Squawktalk's talent for [illegible] Beastbox [illegible] taped confessions, Squawkbox then relays any salient information directly to Soundwave, while [illegible] enforcer and bodyguard.

Frenzy can generate a sonic scream that liquidizes internal circuits!

FRENZY

[illegible] totaled, Frenzy is the man. His battle fervor is boundless; conflict is his oxygen (which sometimes clashes with his covert missions). Still, when the situation demands, just wind him up and watch him go.

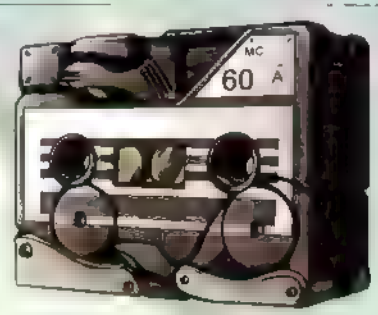


RAVAGE

One of the first TRANSFORMERS or Cybertron to possess a [illegible] "beast" mode (no records exist of Ravage's [illegible] adding to the mystery). Ravage works best alone. A creature of the shadows, he is both hunter (possessed of a sharp olfactory sense) and intruder. Special chameleon "ombre" circuitry allows him to blend into the shadows. Another of Megatron's most trusted warriors, Ravage simply will not give up until [illegible] or a target.

Cassette Mode

Designed to play normally in even a human-built tape deck, Soundwave's agents' cassette mode is a masterpiece of microdesign engineering. Though masquerading as a reel-to-reel tape (with actual music tracks, updated automatically), the actual audio/visual data was stored on digital disks. Razor-edge machine-tool finishing enabled the joints and extremities to interlock seamlessly. But the miniature mass-displacement technology (similar to that used by Megatron in his Earth mode, *see page 21*) that allowed for actual tape-deck size used a huge amount of energy and could, on occasion, lead to the agents becoming stuck in cassette mode.



DINOBOTS

A MYSTERY FROM THE DAWN OF TIME

THE DINOBOTS HAVE always been mysterious, even back on Cybertron. Many myths surround their re-creation on Earth—in some versions, the Dinobots never existed on Cybertron at all! One thing is for certain: the five Dinobots—Grimlock, Sludge, Slag, Swoop, and Snarl—were all troublemakers. Though initially kept apart by Optimus Prime, when Grimlock split to form his own Lightning Strike Coalition force, the others went with him. They then went solo, becoming the Dyno-bots on Cybertron, and emerged on Earth, redesigned as the Dinobots.

Grimlock despises weakness!

The Shockwave Version

In one version of the Dinobots origin, the Ark logs the presence of Decepticon Shockwave on Earth during the time of the dinosaurs, and recreates the Dinobots to combat the threat. (Oddly, the Ark recognized carbon-based life forms here, and yet did not later.)

The Dinosaur Bones Version

In another version, Autobot chief engineer Wheeljack and Ratchet discover dinosaur bones in caverns on Earth, close to where the Ark crash-landed. They are inspired to build and bring to life dinosaur-style warriors. This version overlooks the documented proof of the Dyno-bots previously having existed on Cybertron.

SLAG

Foul-tempered and angry at the world in general, Slag is a disruptive force, more used to brawling than warfare. One molten flame-burst from his fission reactor core can turn an opponent into a metal puddle in seconds.

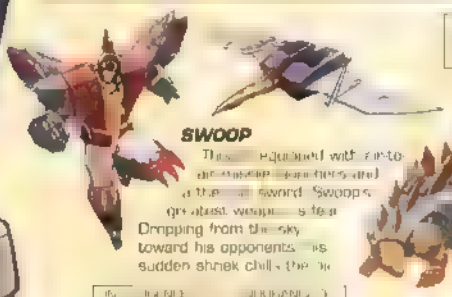
Grimlock's strength rivals even the sheer prowess of Optimus Prime.

In robot mode, Grimlock sometimes wields a mighty energo-sword.

In dinosaur mode, Grimlock can bite through virtually any substance.

GRIMLOCK

There's a popular misconception that Grimlock is a dumb evolutionary throwback. Maybe it's his taciturn, almost ponderous nature, or his clipped, stunted speech patterns. Or maybe that's just what Grimlock wants you to think! In fact, Grimlock is a shrewd and frighteningly effective warrior and commander, with little time for mercy and compassion



SWOOP

This [illegible] equipped with [illegible] and a [illegible] sword. Swoop's greatest weapon is [illegible]. Dropping from the sky toward his opponents [illegible] sudden shriek chills [illegible]

SNARL

Technically [illegible] Snarl is truly [illegible] of battle. Quiet and undemonstrative, he is just waiting to be told who to smash, content to leave the thinking to others. In dinosaur mode, he employs solar collectors on his back to boost his power

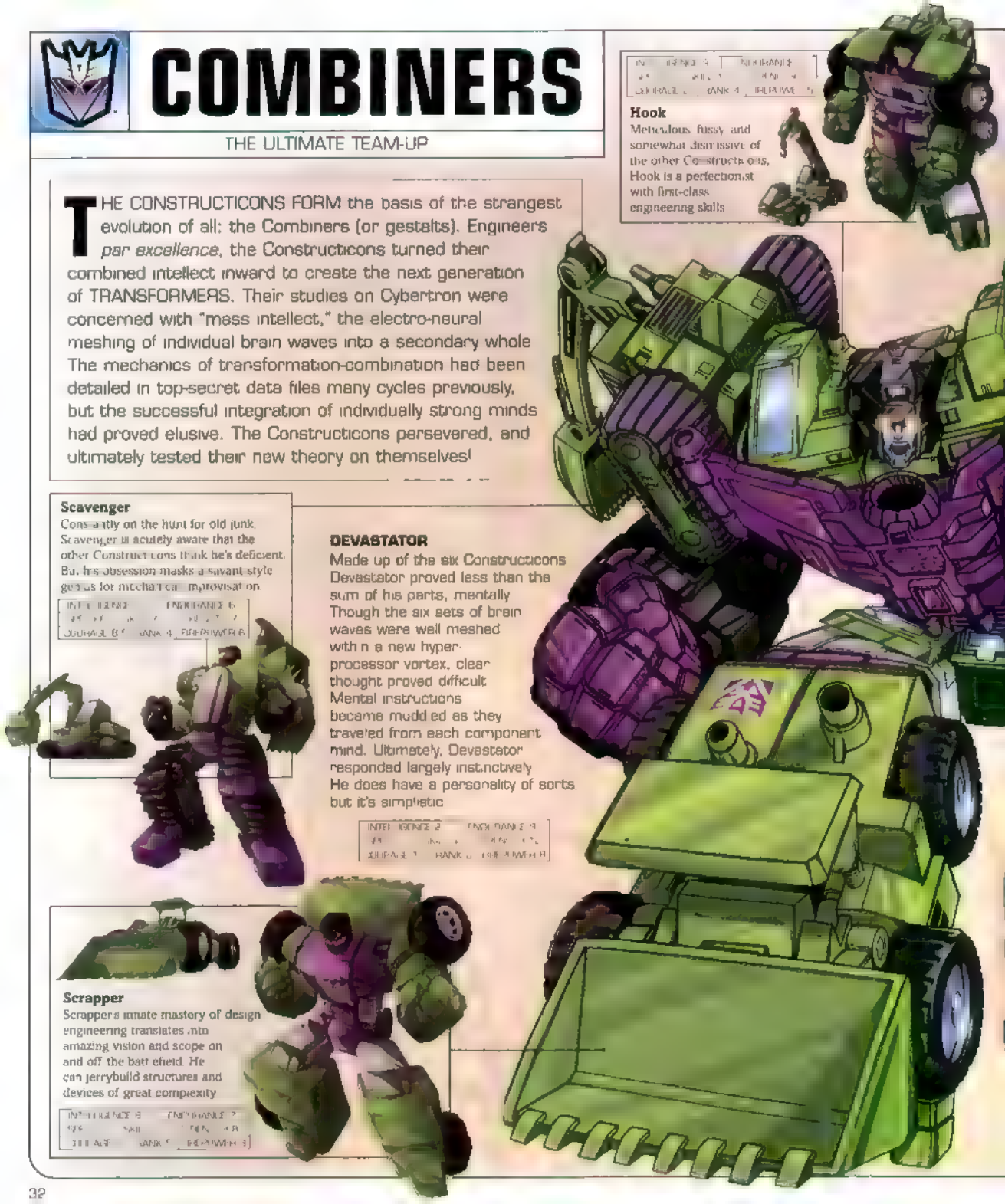
SLUDGE

Unlike Grimlock, Sludge really is dumb and tends to lumber through life crushing or stepping on anything in his way. Ironically, he's actually quite shy, a reasonably gentle soul whose only talent [illegible] is to be to crush and destroy.

COMBINERS

THE ULTIMATE TEAM-UP

THE CONSTRUCTICONS FORM the basis of the strangest evolution of all: the Combiners (or gestalts). Engineers *par excellence*, the Constructicons turned their combined intellect inward to create the next generation of TRANSFORMERS. Their studies on Cybertron were concerned with "mass intellect," the electro-neural meshing of individual brain waves into a secondary whole. The mechanics of transformation-combination had been detailed in top-secret data files many cycles previously, but the successful integration of individually strong minds had proved elusive. The Constructicons persevered, and ultimately tested their new theory on themselves!



Hook

Meticulous, fussy, and somewhat dismissive of the other Constructicons, Hook is a perfectionist with first-class engineering skills.

Scavenger

Constantly on the hunt for old junk, Scavenger is acutely aware that the other Constructicons think he's deficient. But, his obsession masks a savant-style genius for mechanical improvisation.

DEVASTATOR

Made up of the six Constructicons, Devastator proved less than the sum of his parts, mentally. Though the six sets of brain waves were well meshed within a new hyper-processor vortex, clear thought proved difficult. Mental instructions became muddled as they traveled from each component mind. Ultimately, Devastator responded largely instinctively. He does have a personality of sorts, but it's simplistic.

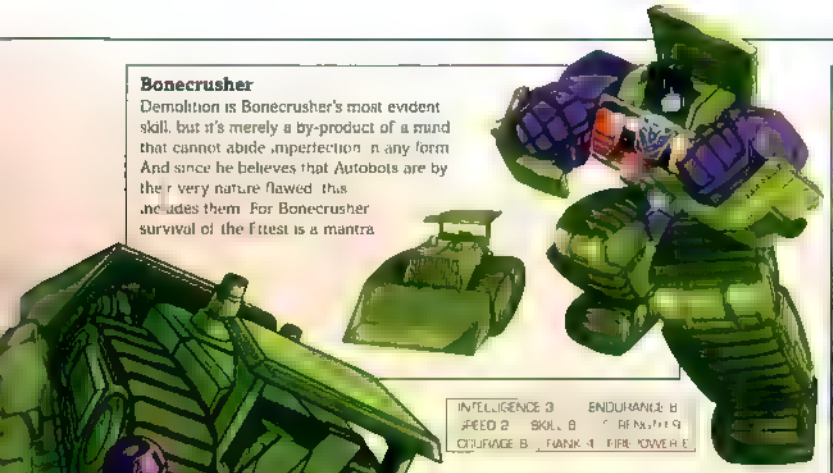
Scrapper

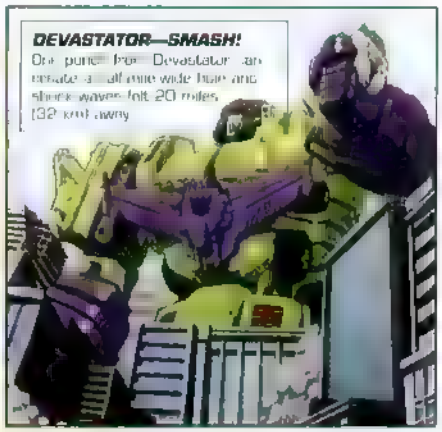
Scrapper's innate mastery of design engineering translates into amazing vision and scope on and off the battlefield. He can jerrybuild structures and devices of great complexity.

Bonecrusher

Demolition is Bonecrusher's most evident skill, but it's merely a by-product of a mind that cannot abide imperfection in any form. And since he believes that Autobots are by their very nature flawed, this includes them. For Bonecrusher, survival of the fittest is a mantra.

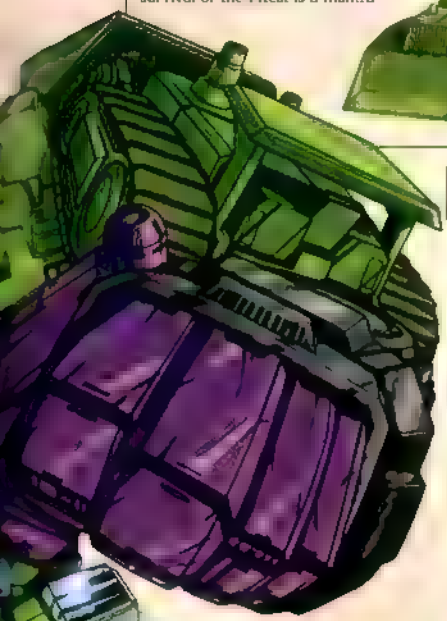
INTELLIGENCE 3		ENDURANCE 8	
SPEED 2	SKILL 8	STRENGTH 9	
COURAGE 8	RANK 4	FIREPOWER 8	

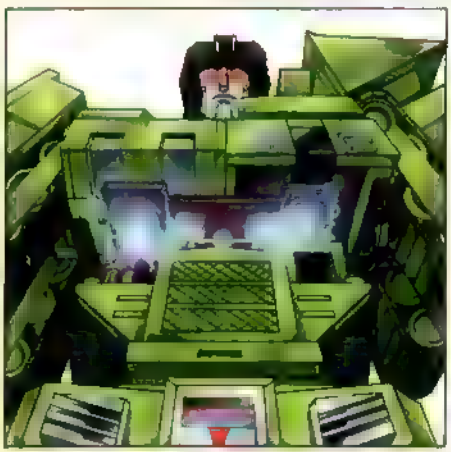




DEVASTATOR—SMASH!

One punch from Devastator can create a shock wave 1 mile wide that shakes everything for 20 miles (32 km) away.

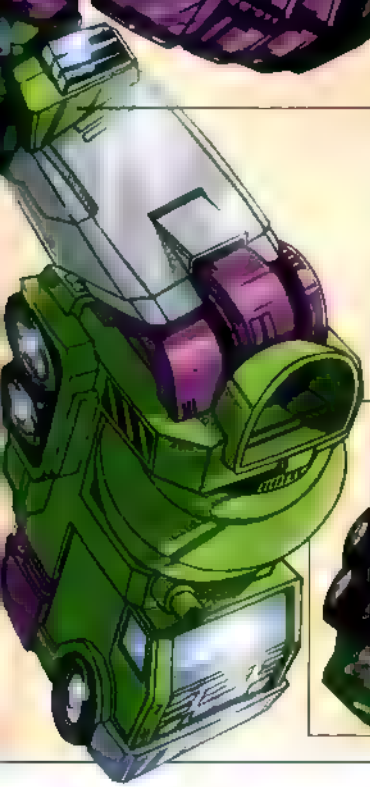




Long Haul

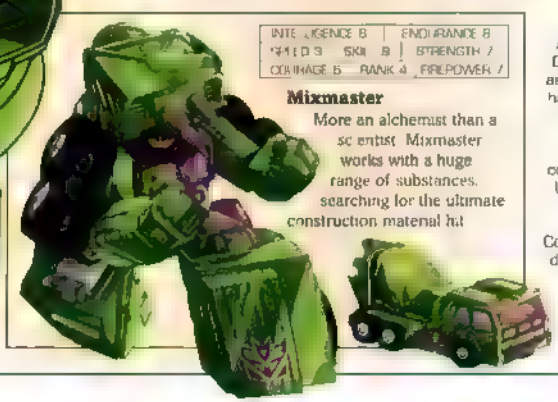
Long Haul dreams of a nobler calling than his assigned duty of "fetch this, carry that." Though perhaps less innovative than some of his fellow Constructicons, he is always upgrading his own fuel conservation equations.

INTELLIGENCE 5		ENDURANCE 9	
SPEED 3	SKILL 4	STRENGTH 9	
COURAGE 8	RANK 4	FIREPOWER 6	



Integration

Each component Constructicon is equipped with a subdermal interlock plate which electrobonds with the corresponding interlock plate (via Interlock Initiators). The primary neural link in the chain (in this case, Hook) is responsible for initiating the combination and separation protocols.



INTELLIGENCE 6		ENDURANCE 8	
SPEED 3	SKILL 8	STRENGTH 7	
COURAGE 6	RANK 4	FIREPOWER 7	

Mixmaster

More an alchemist than a scientist, Mixmaster works with a huge range of substances, searching for the ultimate construction material but

THE BEGINNING

Although in some respects Devastator could be viewed as a failure, the groundwork had been laid for a full-scale Combiner program. Certainly, Megatron was impressed enough to commission further studies. Ultimately, though, Autobot science/research teams would gain access to the Constructicons' development data, whereupon the "mass intellect" theory would be refined, ushering in the dawn of the Special Teams (*see pages 54–55*).

TV SEASON 1

KEY EPISODES FROM THE FIRST TRANSFORMERS TV SERIES

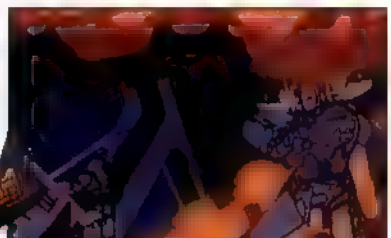
TRANSFORMERS FANS, already enthralled by the toys, were further captivated by the advent of the animated television series. In addition to the detailed character tech specs on the toys, fans could now tune in to see the saga truly come to life. The first episode, "More Than Meets the Eye" Part 1, aired in the United States in September 1984, beginning a 16-episode season that firmly established the Generation 1 cast and series mainstays (though on transmission, these early episodes lacked both title and writer credits, both reinstated later, often on video release). First aired weekly, then daily, the series proved a huge success.

"MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE" PART 1
With fuel reserves seriously depleted, Optimus Prime prepares a vessel to scout for alternate energy sources. Attacked by the Decepticons, the vessel crash-lands on Earth. Four million years later, all combatants—now reconfigured by the Ark's onboard computer, Teletran-1—are reawakened. The Decepticons begin to plunder Earth's fuel reserves, while the Autobots find an ally in human engineer Sparkplug Witwicky and his son, Spike.

"MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE" PART 2
In order to produce energon cubes, Cybertronian fuel conversion/storage units, Megatron plans to flood the valley below the Sherman Dam and siphon off the hydroelectric power. The Autobots intervene, but are forced to focus their efforts on saving a town endangered by the surging waters. The Decepticons strike again, this time at the ruby crystal mines of Burma, and, following an attempt by Bumblebee to plant a bomb, Optimus Prime is trapped by an avalanche.

Buzzsaw in robot mode...

and cassette mode



"MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE" PART 3
Rescued from the cave, Optimus Prime attempts to ambush the Decepticons. Suspecting a trap, Megatron distracts the Autobots while his troops gather fuel, then launches his space cruiser. But Starscream attempts to seize power, give Mirage the chance to bring the ship down to Earth. The Autobots prepare to return to Cybertron, unaware that Megatron has survived.

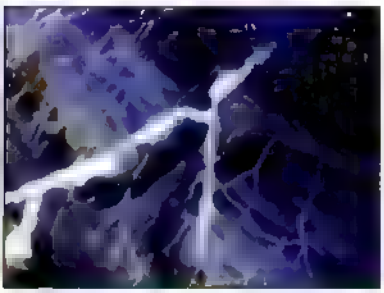
Space Bridges
"Transport to Oblivion" first featured space bridges (interdimensional portals capable of bridging vast gulfs of space). They have since cropped up in the Marvel Comics series Dreamwave's *The War Within*, Beast Wars (as transwarp portals), and even in TRANSFORMERS Armada.

"TRANSPORT TO OBLIVION"
Megatron begins construction of a space bridge with the intention of transporting energon cubes to Cybertron. When Bumblebee uncovers the plan, he is captured, and reprogrammed, and thereafter leads the Autobots into an ambush. They escape, and manage to save Spike from being used to test the space bridge. In the process, the unstable space bridge deposits Megatron on Cybertron, allowing Starscream to seize command on Earth.

"FIRE IN THE SKY"
While drilling in the Arctic intent on drawing power from Earth's core, the Decepticons uncover a TRANSFORMER scientist, Skyfire, frozen in the ice. Skyfire joins the Decepticons, persuaded by his old colleague, Starscream. But when Skyfire is ordered to execute a group of Autobots, he rebels and battles Starscream. Skyfire triggers an avalanche that buries the drilling operation, and him along with it.

"S.O.S. DINOBOTS"

Having uncovered dinosaur bones on Earth, Autobot engineer Wheeljack models three new warriors on the extinct beasts. But the trio—Grimlock, Slag, and Sludge—are savage in nature and go on a rampage that damages Teletran-1. Optimus Prime insists the trio be deactivated, but when he and other Autobots are captured by the Decepticons, Wheeljack sends the Dinobots in to rescue them.



"THE ULTIMATE DOOM" PART 1

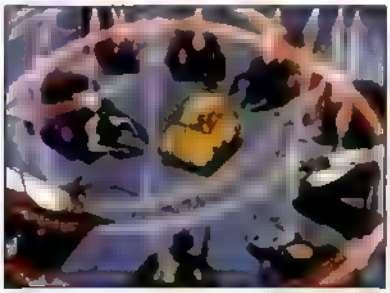
Megatron prepares a space bridge capable of teleporting Cybertron into Earth orbit so he can siphon off the resulting energy surges. To do so, he orders human scientist and collaborator Dr. Arkeville to perfect a mind-control device that will grant him an army of malleable human slaves—starting with Sparkplug. The Autobots attempt to destroy the space bridge, but—fearing that Cybertron will be destroyed in the process—allow it to materialize.

"THE ULTIMATE DOOM" PART 2

As the Decepticons start to ship energon cubes to Cybertron, using Dr. Arkeville's mind-controlled workforce, the Autobots desperately try to minimize the damage to Earth. Spike, meanwhile, leads a group of Autobots to Cybertron to rescue his enslaved father, whereupon they discover the secret of Dr. Arkeville's hypno-chip. But Sparkplug raises the alarm, and the Autobots are trapped inside the Decepticons' HQ.

"THE ULTIMATE DOOM" PART 3

Saved by Wheeljack, the Autobots take refuge in his old workshop. There, Wheeljack studies data on the hypno-chip stolen by Bumblebee. He creates a device that will override the mental control and, having freed Sparkplug, they return to Earth. Autobot firepower causes a cargo of energon cubes aboard Megatron's shuttle to go critical, and the blast knocks Cybertron back out of Earth orbit. Once again, Megatron survives.



"A PLAGUE OF INSECTICONS"

On the island of Bali, Megatron locates a Decepticon escape pod that predates their own arrival on Earth. Its occupants have adapted to life on Earth, and now call themselves Insecticons. Able to convert almost any raw material to Energon, the Insecticons are soon allied with the Decepticons against the Autobots. But when the tide of the battle turns against them, the Insecticons flee, pursued by an outraged Megatron.

"HEAVY METAL WAR"

While Megatron and Optimus Prime prepare for a duel that will force the loser and his army to abandon Earth, the newest Decepticon team, the Constructicons, attack the Ark, intent on disabling Teletran-1. The Dinobots attempt to repel the invaders, only to discover their unique ability to combine into a giant robot, Devastator. Finally, Megatron's trickery—having borrowed powers from the other Decepticons—is exposed.

The Human Characters

Introduced in "More Than Meets the Eye" Part 1, refinery engineer Sparkplug and his son, Spike, are pulled into the war between the Autobots and the Decepticons in the opening skirmishes. In the comics, however, these characters were reformatted as mechanic Sparkplug and his son, Buster, though Spike does eventually turn up as the "other" son. A later episode in Season 1, "Roll For It," introduced wheelchair-bound junior computer whiz kid (and general Autobot ally) Chip Chase, who was exclusive to the TV show. Carlee, Spike's occasional girlfriend (and subsequent fan-site darling), would debut in Season 2's "The Immobilizer," rounding out the core human cast.

Autobot scout, Hound

TV SEASON 2

ORIGINS AND MYTHOLOGY REVEALED IN SELECTED EPISODES FROM THE SECOND SEASON OF THE TV SERIES

IN THE MID-1980S, TRANSFORMERS was at the height of its popularity. Originally aired from September 1985 to January 1986, the expanded second TV season ran to a titanic 49 episodes. Originally, the producers and writers at Sunbow Productions had drawn on much of the groundwork material laid down by Marvel editorial in conjunction with Hasbro. Now they began to forge their own distinct identity, painting in a Cybertronian back-story and cast unique to the series. Many fans regard the second season as the defining segment of the animated show.

"DINOBOT ISLAND" PART 1

Now a quintet, the Dinobots are relocated to a mysterious island populated by real dinosaurs, where they can master their powers safely. When the Decepticons learn of the island's rich energy deposits, they plunder its resources and in doing so, set in motion a series of bizarre time displacements. The Dinobots respond to the threat, but—unwilling to let the real dinosaurs be harmed—they end up trapped in a tar pit.

"DINOBOT ISLAND" PART 2

Rather than appearances of time-warp portals increase, forcing the Autobots actively to contain the strange disturbances. Having ascertained that the disturbances are scattered, the Dinobots stand the Autobots investigate, but are assailed by Decepticons. Starscream's warnings about tampering with unstable forces are ignored. As the disturbances intensify, the Dinobots are freed from the tar pit and help repel the Decepticons.

Alpha Trion

"ARCHEOBOTS"

An archaeological expedition uncovers Megatron's frozen spacecraft, with which he attacked the Ark 4 million years ago. The Constructicons enter the vessel, while the Dinobots monitor their progress. Inside the vessel, called the Heart of Cybertron, which energises Megatron with huge power. Autobot scientist Perceptor proposes microsizing himself and disabling the Heart of Cybertron from within. Megatron. With Brawn and Bumblebee's help, he manages to destroy the device, ending Megatron's rampage.

"MEGATRON'S MASTER PLAN" PART 1

When industrialist Sean Berger fails in his attempt to contain the Decepticon threat, the Autobots come to his aid. Subsequently they are jailed as aliens. But Megatron produces a manufactured videotape showing the Autobots stealing fuel. As the Autobots go on trial, Spike uncovers the evidence that will prove their innocence, but is attacked by Ravage. Banished from Earth, Megatron uses Teletraan 1 to set the Autobots on a direct course with the Sun.

"MEGATRON'S MASTER PLAN" PART 2

Megatron watches as the Autobots ship is destroyed, unaware that Cosmos has managed to extract his fellow Autobots and is holding them suspended within a force field. Spike produces the evidence and Megatron abandons his pretense. He attacks Berger and deceives martial law forces into his slavery. Human ally Chip attempts to contact the Autobots, and as he does so, Teletraan 1 is damaged, allowing the Autobots to return to Earth and defeat the Decepticons.

"THE SECRET OF OMEGA SUPREME"

When the Constructicons begin mining for a distant asteroid, Optimus Prime calls in Omega Supreme to investigate. Driven by a sense of personal betrayal, Omega Supreme tackles the Constructicons, only to discover that the asteroid is actually an egg, which hatches a giant alien bird-creature. Prime convinces Omega Supreme to set aside his quest for vengeance and prevent the bird-creature from destroying San Francisco.

"THE SEARCH FOR ALPHA TRION"

On Cybertron, "female" TRANSFORMER Eleta-1 is captured by Megatron. Aware of Optimus Prime's former links with Eleta-1, Megatron uses her as bait. Captured himself, Prime is saved from an acid pit by Eleta-1, who uses a time-freeze mechanism to suspend the flow of time. The desperate attempt leaves Eleta-1 close to death, and she convinces Prime to find Alpha Trion, who she believes can save her. He does so, thereby revealing a link to their creator.

"THE KEY TO VECTOR SIGMA" PART 1

Determined to bring life to his new warriors, the Stunticons, Megatron realizes he needs the help of the life-giving Vector Sigma computer on Cybertron. He steals Vector Sigma's activation key from its guardian, Alpha Trion, who subsequently enlists the aid of Optimus Prime. Deep within Cybertron, Prime confronts Megatron, but the Stunticons have already been activated. Megatron returns to Earth with the key, while Alpha Trion suggests to Prime that he counter the threat with new warriors of his own.

"THE KEY TO VECTOR SIGMA" PART 2

Without the Key, Prime is unable to grant life to the newly created Aerialbots, so Alpha Trion joins his essence with the vast computer, freeing its life-giving energies. Prime returns to Earth, but finds the Aerialbots (except Silverbolt) unwilling to fight for the humans. Megatron, meanwhile, has discovered that the Key can remake organic matter into metal, and proceeds to turn its power on Earth. Finally, the Aerialbots rally and the Key is destroyed.

"WAR DAWN"

Megatron's attempt to steal power from Cybertron's Golden Age leads to the Aerialbots being stranded nine million years in the past. There they meet Orion Pax, who falls four of that era's Megatron and his fledgling Decepticons. The Aerialbots take Orion Pax to Alpha Trion, who repairs and remakes him as Optimus Prime. Prime and the Aerialbots frustrate Megatron's efforts to steal energon cubes and they return to their own time — and their own Prime.

"COSMIC RUST"

Investigating a former Autobot colony, Megatron is infected with a rust plague. Dying, he has the Stunticons force Perceptor to find a cure. Perceptor offers Megatron the last of the supply of Chorostop, a rust prohibiter, in return for a powerful heat ray the Decepticons discovered. Cured, Megatron reneges on the deal and infects the Autobots. A desperate chase to the Statue of Liberty (recently coated with Chorostop) ensues, as Wheeljack attempts to use a sample to synthesize enough Chorostop to cure them all.

"STARSCREAM'S BRIGADE"

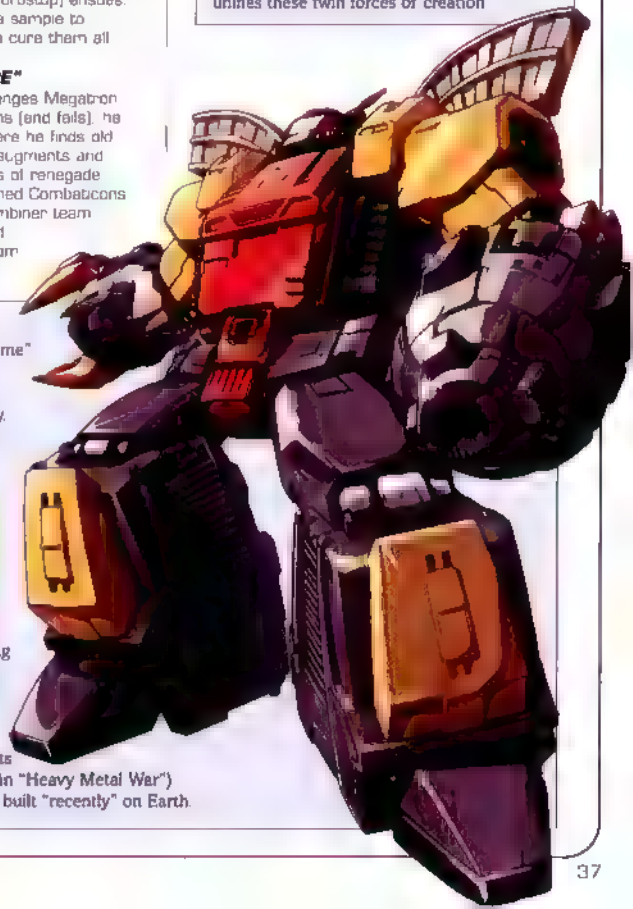
When Starscream openly challenges Megatron for leadership of the Decepticons (and fails), he is exiled to a remote island. There he finds old WWII army vehicles, which he augments and instills with the personality chips of renegade Decepticons. The newly christened Combaticons attack, but Megatron's own Combiner team, the Stunticons, responds in kind. The Combaticons and Starscream are exiled to a barren asteroid.

Alpha Trion and Vector Sigma

Season 2 sees the beginning of a continuity schism between cartoon series and comic book. Finally, after more than 50 episodes, the series producers and writers began to introduce a TRANSFORMERS mythology. They created characters unique to the TV series and an origin for Cybertron itself. Introduced originally in "The Search for Alpha Trion," Alpha Trion was now established not just as the guardian of Vector Sigma, the all-powerful computer that breathed life into the entire TRANSFORMERS race, but also as the creator of Optimus Prime (here given an original name, Orion Pax). With the loss of Vector Sigma's activation key, Alpha Trion merges with the Vector Sigma matrix, and unifies these twin forces of creation.

Omega Supreme

"The Secret of Omega Supreme" established two important (and contentious) pieces of TRANSFORMERS back-story. We learn that the powerful Autobot, Omega Supreme (introduced in "Blaster's Blues"), was the guardian of Crystal City on Cybertron, and that he befriended the then-benevolent Constructicons. Megatron subsequently rewrote the Constructicons' brain waves, turning them into a combining force for evil. In the process, Crystal City was destroyed, leaving Omega Supreme to seek retribution. This double origin story contradicts Megatron's earlier assertion (in "Heavy Metal War") that the Constructicons were built "recently" on Earth.



THE MOVIE

BEYOND YOUR WILDEST IMAGININGS...

RELEASED IN 1986, *Transformers: The Movie* was a real widescreen treat for the senses, thrusting the war between the Autobots and Decepticons forward to the year 2005. A Sunbow/Marvel co-production, it sported an epic storyline and top-drawer voice cast (including Leonard Nimoy, Judd Nelson, Robert Stack, Eric Idle, and even cinematic legend Orson Welles). Introducing the planet-sized TRANSFORMER Unicron (voiced by Welles) and boldly offing Optimus Prime in the first act, the movie moved the entire saga up a notch in terms of sheer high stakes, and rolled on into a dedicated third season of the TV show and a whole UK comic-based continuity of its own.

ULTRA MAGNUS

The noble and powerful Autobot Commander, Ultra Magnus, was not destined to become the chosen Autobot leader, despite being given the Matrix by a dying Optimus Prime (instead, the Matrix itself chose Hot Rod). Nevertheless, Magnus' courage and strength are legendary, and he remained a key character in both the TV series and comic books. Voiced in the movie by Robert Stack (Elliot Ness in TV's *The Untouchables*), Magnus gave all subsequent Autobot commanders a worthy right-hand man.

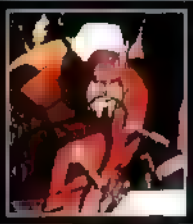
GALVATRON

Megatron's movie incarnation, Galvatron, was voiced by Leonard Nimoy (*Star Trek*'s Mr. Spock). Galvatron became the villain of many later TV episodes and comic books, and would return in the US and UK comics. Though Optimus Prime would reappear in the TV series, Megatron was gone for good.

THE MOVIE STORY

It is the year 2005. Megatron attacks Autobot City on Earth and breaches its defenses, despite the efforts of Autobot Commander Ultra Magnus. Only the arrival of Optimus Prime stops the city from being overrun, and he and Megatron meet in final battle. Prime is critically wounded, but manages one last colossal strike that fells Megatron. The Decepticons retreat, and the dying Prime passes the Matrix of Leadership to Ultra Magnus. The ever-ambitious Starscream dumps Megatron's battered body in the depths of space and takes his place as leader. Megatron, though, is recreated by Unicron and—now called Galvatron—takes swift revenge on Starscream. The only thing Unicron fears is the Autobot Matrix of Leadership, and he orders Galvatron to find and destroy it...

Galvatron transforms into a laser pistol and a mobile laser cannon.



Wreck-Gar

Monty Python's Eric Idle provided the vocals for Wreck-Gar, leader of the Junkions. Weaned on a diet of TV shows beamed in from around the galaxy, Wreck-Gar and his fellow Junkions speak only in catch phrases and advertising slogans. Despite their eccentric nature, the Junkions' mechanical skills are second to none.

THE ACTION UNFOLDS

Galvatron pursues Ultra Magnus to the planet of Junk, where he destroys Magnus and claims the Matrix for himself, meaning to enslave Unicron. The Junkions help rebuild Ultra Magnus, and their leader, Wreck-Gar, vows to fight against Unicron. Kup, Hot Rod, and the Dinobots escape from the demented Quintesson judges (*see page 52*). Together with the Junkions, the regrouped Autobots strike at Unicron as it attacks Cybertron. But only when Hot Rod challenges Galvatron deep within Unicron does the tide of battle turn. The Matrix power is unleashed at Hot Rod's touch, transforming him into the new Autobot leader, Rodimus Prime, and destroying Unicron.

THE DEATH OF PRIME

Hot Rod looks on, unaware that he (not Ultra Magnus) is the next Autobot leader.

Rodimus Prime
In the final battle against Unicron, the power of the Matrix transformed the young, brash warrior, Hot Rod, into the new Autobot leader, Rodimus Prime. Possessed of a strong, calm voice of reason, he would eventually destroy Unicron and become a commander of great wisdom and power.

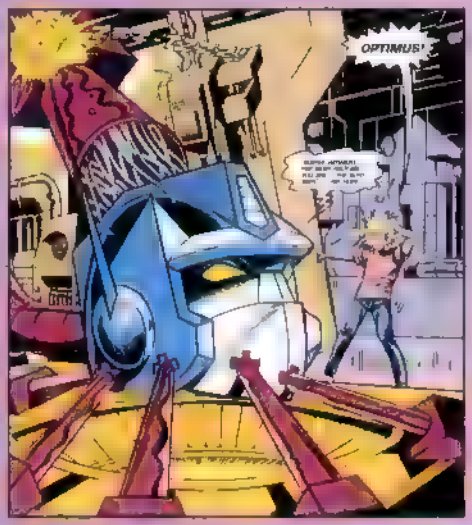
EPIC BATTLE
The promotional art for *Transformers: The Movie* depicted the dramatic battle against the vast, planet-devouring Unicron.

Instruments of Destruction
Transformers: The Movie featured tracks from NRG, Vince DiCola, Stan Bush, Weird Al Yankovic, and a blistering version of the TRANSFORMERS theme. DiCola and Bush reprised their turn at 1997's Botcon Convention.

US COMICS 1

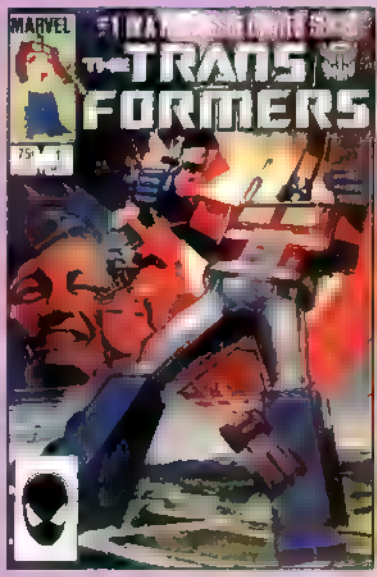
THE MIGHTY WORLD OF MARVEL

BACK IN 1983, after the success of the G.I Joe toy line and its comic book incarnation, toy giant Hasbro turned again to the hallowed halls of Marvel Comics in New York as they prepared to launch TRANSFORMERS. Marvel revolutionized the comics business in the 1960s with characters like Spider-Man the Incredible Hulk, and the Fantastic Four. Writer and editor Bob Budiansky undertook the massive task of ascribing names and identities to a range of largely unlabeled toys. Budiansky laid much of the groundwork for the toyline, TV show and, inevitably the comic book. But since Marvel operated a strict internal policy of editors not writing for their own books, the first issue was actually written by Bill Mantlo and Ralph Macchio, with Bob Budiansky in overall editorial charge. The original four-issue miniseries proved so popular, it immediately spawned an ongoing series, with Budiansky (having handed over the editorial reins) taking over as writer.



THE MATRIX—UNLEASHED!

The Marvel series almost immediately began to delve into the origins and primal forces at work in the TRANSFORMERS Universe. The Creation Matrix, the quasi-mystic force that granted life to newly built TRANSFORMERS was quickly identified and quantified. In an early story arc, Optimus Prime is captured, his head removed and isolated in order to subvert the power of the Matrix. To frustrate the Decepticons, Prime transfers the Matrix energy to human ally Buster Witwicky.

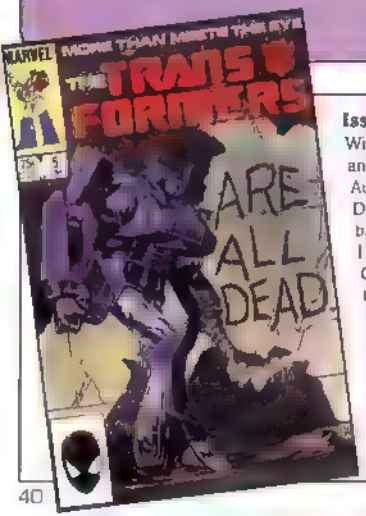


THE FIRST ISSUE

Launched in 1984, *Transformers* #1 featured cover art by maverick creator Bill Sienkiewicz

THE HUMANS

Comic specific human characters included Sparkplug and Buster Witwicky, Joey Slick (nephew), Josie Beller (Circuit Breaker) Donny Finkleberg (Robot Master) industrialist G.B. Blackrock and Buster's girlfriend, Jessie.



Issues #1–6

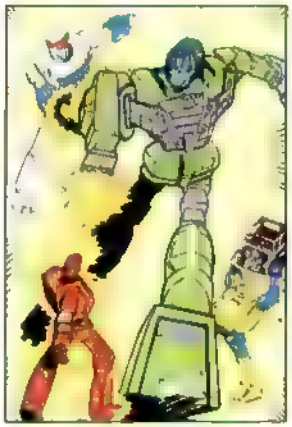
With the help of Sparkplug Witwicky and some poisoned fuel, the Autobots triumph over the Decepticons in their first round of battles. But, their victory is short lived as Shockwave strikes back. Only Ratchet escapes, discovering that Prime is now a disembodied head, tapped for the power of the Matrix. Megatron, relegated to second-in-command, plots to regain the Decepticon leadership, forcing Ratchet to reactivate the Dinobots, who once fazed and defeated Shockwave.

Issues #7–16

Ratchet travels to the Savage Land to find the Dinobots. But far from aiding Megatron, the Dinobots turn on him, and Megatron, fails to his apparent doom. Shockwave's attacks on G.B. Blackrock's origins spawn a human nemesis in the shape of Circuit Breaker, a woman able to manipulate electricity and robotic circuitry. Optimus Prime hides the Creation Matrix in the mind of Buster Witwicky, and—with the aid of Jetfire—Prime is finally liberated. New Autobots such as Skids, Tracks, and Trailbreaker are created and Megatron returns to challenge Shockwave.

REPEAT PERFORMANCE

When the Autobots are all captured by Decepticon commander Shockwave, chief medical officer Ratchet (pictured) is forced to take center stage. With more scope for character development through internalized dialogue, the comic series began to flesh out the cast in ways that the cartoon series could not do in its 22 fast and furious minutes of airtime. Ratchet, in search of the Dinobots, and manipulated by Megatron is forced to question his role in the Autobot forces and plumb new depths of resolve and courage.

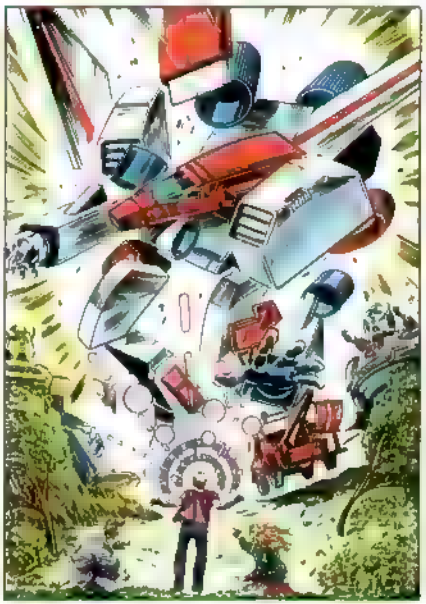


CONSTRUCTION TIME AGAIN

The first 2 issues of the Marvel Comics series are packed to the rafters with characters. The toy range was set to start with [illegible] growing fast. Marvel was on a monthly publishing schedule and worked flat out to keep up. New characters, like the Constructicons (all six of them [illegible] Devastator) had to be squeezed into a single issue, then cleared out of the way for the next influx of robots.

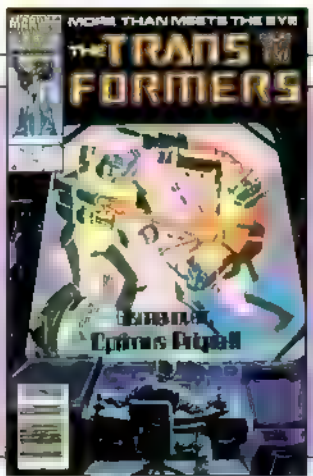
SKYFIRE/JETFIRE

The Dinobots had their own unique comics engine, so why not airborne Autobot Jetfire (subsequently Skyfire in the TV show)? Here, Jetfire is created on Earth by Shockwave as a Decepticon and directed against the Autobots. He's spectacularly disassembled by Buster Witwicky, tapping the awesome power of the Creation Matrix, and subsequently put back together again with a splash more "Autobot" in the mix to boot, commensurate TV incarnations' disfiliance with the Decepticons meant he was never fully trusted.



Issues #17–25

Contact is reestablished with Cybertron, and Shockwave and Megatron agree to a truce. On Cybertron, Blaster thwarts local Decepticon commander Lord Straxus' plan to open up a Space Bridge route between the two worlds. Omega Supreme defends the Ark against an all-out Decepticon attack and the Special Teams debut. Megatron faces Prime within a computer game, and although Prime is destroyed, his brain waves are saved by programmer Ethan Zachary.



Issues #26–37

Grimlock assumes command of the Autobots on Earth. Meanwhile, Blaster—now stranded on Earth—is infected by a living, metal-decaying disease called Scraplets, and, though subsequently cured, strikes out on his own, unable to accept Grimlock's command. Circuit Breaker and the G.B. Blackrock-funded RAAT (Rapid Anti-Robot Assault Team) step up their campaign against TRANSFORMERS, prompting Blaster to investigate. But he's waylaid by Autobot forces, under orders to arrest him for treason.

US COMICS 2

EXPANDING THE UNIVERSE

MARVEL'S TRANSFORMERS COMIC was a bona fide hit, racking up sales to rival some of the company's core superhero titles. It seemed logical—inevitable, even—that spinoff titles would follow. First up was a team-up miniseries, pairing Hasbro stablemates TRANSFORMERS and G.I. Joe (*see pages 70–71*), then a three-issue adaptation of *Transformers: The Movie*. *Transformers Universe*, which followed shortly after, collected Bob Budiansky's epic series of character profiles with newly inked and colored art, depicting the characters in both robot and alternate mode. The four-issue *Headmasters* series (*see also pages 56–57*) introduced the latest toyline, its storyline weaving back into the ongoing series. But change was on the way. After more than 50 issues, *Transformers* US writer Bob Budiansky was ready for a break. At issue #56, he handed over to Simon Furman, fresh from his long run on the UK TRANSFORMERS comic book series. Furman introduced a sweeping, intergalactic storyline, steering the title toward an epic do-or-die final battle against the TRANSFORMERS' ultimate enemy. But the series' momentum could not last forever, and more drastic changes loomed.

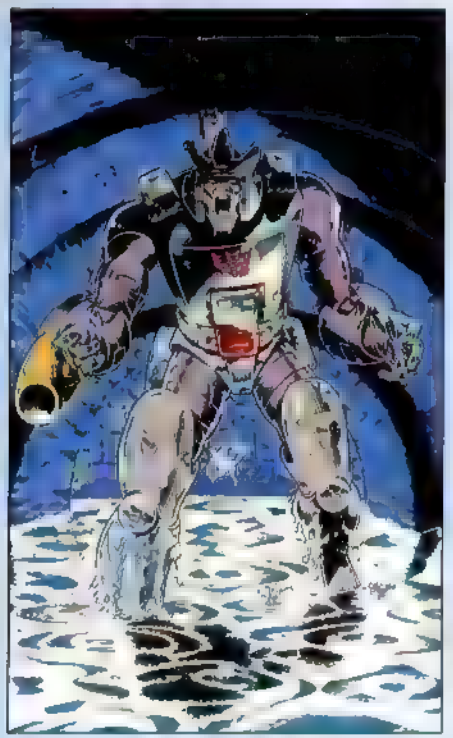
TRANSFORMERS #31
'Buster Witwicky and the Car Wash of Doom' represents the more lighthearted side of the US TRANSFORMERS comic

[illegible]

The first issues after Budiansky's departure paved the way for the introduction of the biggest bad guy of all! Things began on a relatively small scale, as Decepticon assassins Bludgeon, Stranglehold and Octopunch collectively known as The Mayhem Attack Squad (pictured), pursued Grimlock, Jazz and Bumblebee into the heart of Cybertron. There, they disturbed the vast, slumbering consciousness of Primus, and his awakening scream reached the distant audio sensors of his terrifying adversary, Unicron.

Headmasters #1–4
Tired of war, Fortress Maximus and several other Autobots head for the planet Nebulos, where their arrival is resented. Soon afterward, a group of Decepticons, led by Scorponok show up. Fortress Maximus agrees to a truce with the Nebulan leader Galen, and he and other Nebulans have surgery to transform them into TRANSFORMER heads and weapons. Scorponok strikes a deal with the power-hungry Lord Zarak. To safeguard Nebulos, Fortress Maximus draws the Decepticons away to Earth.

Issues #38–46
The Headmasters and Targetmasters resume their battle, and Galen is killed, forcing Spike Witwicky to take over as the head of Fortress Maximus. His first task is to rescue his brother Buster, who is trapped on the Decepticons' island base. Fortress Maximus defeats Shockwave and Rumbat escapes, piloting the base into space. Meanwhile, Blaster prepares to fight Grimlock in a duel, but the Decepticons' arrival unites them. In an effort to restore Optimus Prime, Fortress Maximus returns to Nebulos. Prime is recreated as a Powermaster, with a Nebulan engine component.



MATRIX QUEST

The "Matrix Quest" storyline (in issues #52–66) sees teams of Autobots dispatched to the far corners of the galaxy in search of the Creation Matrix. Their efforts are dogged by the Decepticon commander Thunderwing (a little-used Pretender character upgraded for the US comic).

Tainted with evil when possessed by Thunderwing, the Creation Matrix is turned against Optimus Prime!

GALVATRON(S)

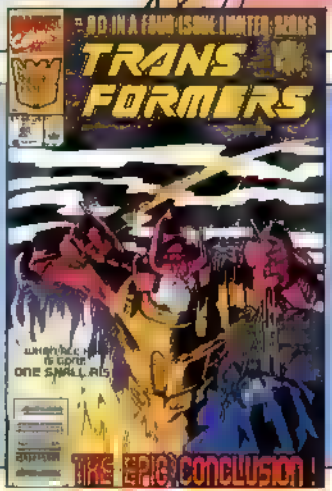
Not content with one time-traveling Galvatron (from *Transformers: The Movie* to the UK TRANSFORMERS comic), the US comic introduced a second dimension-hopping Galvatron. This version of Galvatron ruled a future Earth already conquered by the Decepticons. Unicron (in the present day of the US comic) is in need of a herald, and sends his agents Hook, Line, and Sinker to capture and enslave Galvatron all over again.

Bob Budiansky

Although he has written and edited many other comic books (including *Ghost Rider* and *Spider-Man*), the importance of Bob Budiansky's contribution to TRANSFORMERS cannot be overstated—not only for the sheer volume of issues he penned, but also for the hundreds of characters (with all their names, personalities, strengths, and abilities), worlds and wars he fashioned in the five years of his direct involvement.

Issues #47–66

The Decepticons locate Underbase, the storehouse of ancient Cybertronian knowledge. Out to claim it for himself, Starscream devastates his own forces—only to be blown apart by its power. Megatron returns, but his plans are derailed by Ratchet, and both are caught in a blast. Alerted to the ancient threat of Unicron, Optimus Prime searches for the Creation Matrix (lost when his previous body was sent into the depths of space), only to lose it again to new Decepticon commander Thunderwing.



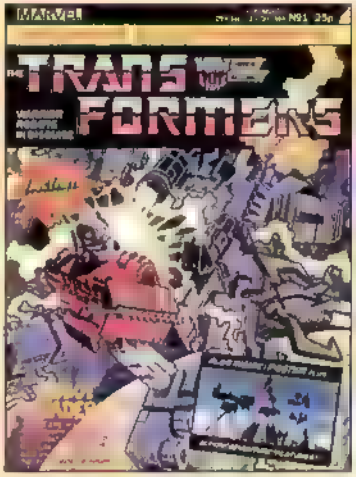
Issues #67–80

Unicron prepares to devour Cybertron, attacking the Autobots ahead of his arrival through a Galvatron plucked from an alternate dimension. Prime meanwhile attempts to unite the Autobots and Decepticons, but Shockwave attacks, initiating a Decepticon civil war. All combatants are re-located to Cybertron just in time for an all-out battle against Unicron. Scorponok is killed, and Prime sacrifices himself to save Cybertron—but returns to defeat the Decepticons.

UK COMICS 1

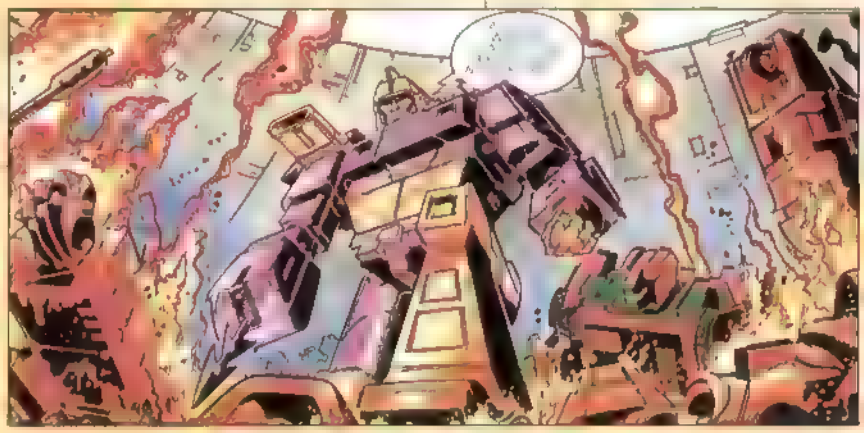
TRAWLING THE FUTURE

IN THE UK, Marvel's regional office produced comic titles such as *Captain Britain Monthly* and *Dr. Who*. In 1984, it launched its own TRANSFORMERS comic. Originally published biweekly (in color with some black and white pages), *Transformers* UK began reprinting the US comic series, but was soon short of material (*Transformers* US was published monthly). The answer was to originate TRANSFORMERS comic material in the UK, so creators were commissioned to write and draw stories that spun in and out of the US continuity. This, of course, proved extremely limiting in terms of what could or couldn't be done and which characters could or couldn't be used. So, when *Transformers: The Movie* was released, the UK office descended hungrily on its cast of future characters and storylines. With the US comic focusing exclusively on the present-day cast, the creators could run wild with expanded "movie tie-in" storylines. Now a full-color weekly comic, the stories began to enlarge the TRANSFORMERS universe, crafting epic story arcs with a dedicated UK cast of supporting characters and a growing fanbase.



TRANSFORMERS #1

Featuring a new cover by Geary Pans, UK issue #1 reprinted the first 11 pages of *Transformers* US #1, backed up with a strip from Marvel's *Machine Man* series. As was usual for UK comics, the first issue came complete with a free gift – in this case TRANSFORMERS "factor trading stickers."



TARGET: 2006

The saga of "Target: 2006" spins out of the scene in *Transformers: The Movie* when Galvatron orders the Decepticons to Earth! The beginning of an epic, time-wave saga that casts all present-day characters (for both Earth and Cybertron) with their future counterparts. Galvatron travels back in time to set up his future dominance of Unicron, only to be thwarted by Ultra Magnus and a trio of movie Autobots. "Target: 2006" also introduced the highly popular Autobot Special Ops group, the Wreckers, and their leader, the UK comic creation in whose honor pictured.

Issues #1–10

Stories such as "Man of Iron" and "The Enemy Within" worked within narrow gaps in the US continuity. The Dinobots, largely sidelined by the US comic, steal the thrust of these early UK tales. They relive events from the TV episode "More Than Meets the Eye Part 2" and come up against the Aries Guardian Terrest droid and their own deceiving robot caterers. The rogue Dinobots are finally subdued in "Dinobot Hunt."

Issues #51–70

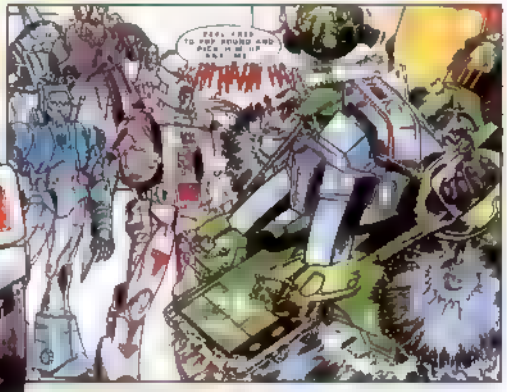
"In the National Interest" sees the return of the Dreads, after which the UK comic starts to go its own way with the movie-inspired "Target: 2006." When Galvatron, Cyclonus and Scourge travel back in time, Optimus Prime is sidelined to a limbo realm. Galvatron and his lieutenants are duly routed by Ultra Magnus returning Prime to the real world. Prime then returns to Cybertron, where wrongly accused to be an imposter, he is hunted by his fellow Autobots.

GALVATRON VERSUS ULTRA MAGNUS

This epic future-versus-present-day clash would be played out across several story arcs in the UK comics Target 2006 "Fallen Angel" and "Time Wars"] Cybertron's greatest warrior Ultra Magnus is sent to Earth to find the missing Optimus Prime, but finds a vengeful and increasingly deranged Galvatron. The sanity of the future Decepticon leader is clearly in question after the end of *The Stormers: The Movie*! Initial skirmishes lead to both being ensnared in lava

CENTURION

Transformers: UK soon established a significant cast of characters and locations. Scientist Professor Morris attempts to possess the mind of Diaclot Swoop after their returns as the controlling intellect behind government special weapon Centurion (subsequently usurped by Galvatron). Other UK support characters include reporter Joy Meadows and archaeologist Sasan Hoffman



"2005" VERSUS "2006"

When the Marvel UK strips ended, it was marked as the movie being romantically torn while working from an early draft of the movie script, the movie itself still (unchanged) so that early draft the year is 2006 (hence "Target 2006" but in the final cut it is 2005. It was too late to correct, so the comic movie gap is always plus one

Issues #100–132

On the run with fellow Autobot Outback, Prime recounts the story of their first battle and the parasitic creatures that tried to possess them. Prime and Ultra Magnus take on Megatron, who himself is in danger of being possessed by the mind of Lord Straxus. The future has returned to "Wanted: Galvatron: Dead or Alive" with Optimus Prime travelling back in time to find the rogue Galvatron

Issues #133–149

Rodimus Prime becomes the target of bounty hunter Deadrus. Head returns in the two part "Head Trip". This sets up the epic "Legacy of Unicron" storyline. At the end of *Transformers: The Movie* Unicron's head is seen spinning off into outer space. "Legacy of Unicron" picks up from there, when Unicron's head (now fully functional) is discovered on the planet of Junk, having enslaved the entire Junkion race

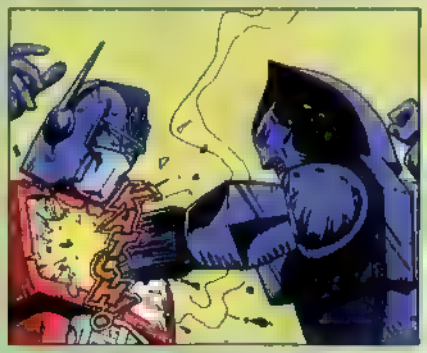
UK COMICS 2

A RECORD-BREAKING RUN

AS THE UK TRANSFORMERS comic rolled on into its second and third years, the confidence of its creators grew and they stepped fully out of the shadow of the US series. Though some US reprints were still necessary for story and budgetary reasons, the UK stories were now more plentiful, with their own direction and dedicated cast. The story arcs were imbued with a harder edge and broader character sweeps than earlier, and moved from past to future and from Earth to Cybertron. At its peak, *Transformers* UK was selling more than 200,000 copies per issue. Inevitably, though, the audience was growing up and moving on. But a core readership would keep the title going after many of its contemporaries had fallen by the wayside. In all, the UK comic reached 332 issues, making it far and away the longest-running licensed comic title in the UK.

SEASONAL STORYLINES

"Stargazing" – issue #145 continued a UK comics tradition of sorts, with a dedicated festive issue and story, plus the inevitable holly or snow on the logo.

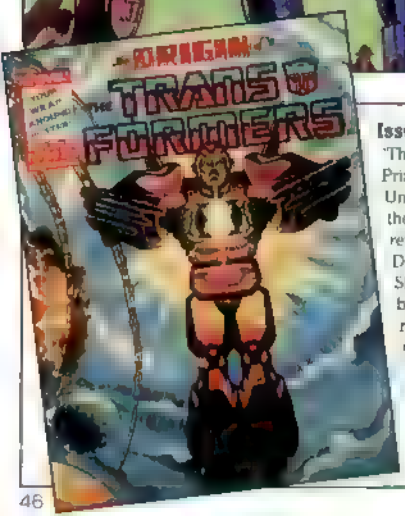


THE TWO MEGATRONS

In an effort to marry divergent continuities, a second Megatron was introduced. The Megatron who appeared in issues #125–244 of the UK comic is revealed as an impostor, a perfect double created by Lord Straxus (pictured) should his plan to possess Megatron fail.

TIME WARS

The present-day presence of future Decepticon Galvatron, and then Cyclonus and Scourge (pictured)—all of whom were now stranded in their past—caused all sorts of time-related mayhem. From "The Legacy of Unicron," through "Space Pirates" and related one- or two-offs, the movie storyline reached its conclusion in "Time Wars." The death of Cyclonus years before he's created and the presence of Megatron-Galvatron (formerly self) at Galvatron's side illustrate a breakdown of the entire structure of space and time.



Issues #150–179

"The Legacy of Unicron" wraps up Primus' eternal struggle against Unicron and reveals the origin of the TRANSFORMERS. Galvatron returns, attacking present-day Decepticon commander Shockwave in his undersea base. Ultra Magnus then returns to Cybertron and is met by rogue Autobot Flame Magnus fights in the "State Games," before Galvatron, Cyclonus, and Scourge return to face the Wreckers on Earth in "Wrecking Havoc."

Issues #180–198

In "Space Pirates," the villainous Quintessons (*see page 52*) take center stage as, with their own world dying, they begin to target Cybertron and Autobot City on Earth for a replacement. Wreck Gar and the city-sized Metroplex scupper the plans. Quintessa is consumed by a growing rift caused by Galvatron and his time-traveling cohorts, a spatial anomaly that is aggravated by the death of Cyclonus. An event that sends shock waves through space and time, leading to

DECONSTRUCTING GALVATRON

Having carried much of the UK series almost single-handedly, it was fitting that Galvatron finally went [illegible] style. Utterly mad and out of control, he [illegible] and space, and [illegible] ...ously gleeful panels [illegible] Sullivan) [illegible] to the past.

BOOKENDS

When *Transformers* US #43 was reprinted, it ran contrary to the UK comic continuity because it featured Galvatron, Wreck-Gar and others from the future cast. So a new prologue-epilogue recast the story as a flash... Wreck-Gar's [illegible] ...ent Greed [illegible] ...children [illegible] ...everywhere!" was [illegible] ...from a similarly themed episode of mid-'60s TV series *The Prisoner*, and artist [illegible] ...ee Sullivan embellished the [illegible] panel [above] with shadows that form the show's trademark bicycle wheel.

The Writer

"Back when I was writing *Transformers* UK, I had no real idea that there was loyal fanbase developing, one that would endure and thrive with the introduction of the Internet, and certainly no idea that the stories would be so scrutinized and dissected. But I know now! Though my career has included a lot of other comics and TV work, it's TRANSFORMERS that gets the most attention. And hey, I've kind of grown to like it."

Ravage, art by Robin Smith

THE ARTISTS

Many artists left their [illegible] ...indelible [illegible] to *Transformers* UK during the course of its run. Artists such as Barry Kitson (*Empire*), Bryan Hitch (*The Authority*), Geoff Senior (*Dragon's Claws*), Robin Smith (*Judge Dredd*), Will Simpson [illegible], and Andrew Wildman (*X-Man Adventures*) all contributed to the title. Andrew Wildman [illegible] on to draw the US comic from issue #69 to its conclusion.

Issues #199–214

"Time Wars," the final battle between Galvatron and the future Autobots. Galvatron teams up with his former self, Megatron, and causes cosmic upheavals for two eras. Present and future Autobot leaders Fortress Maximus and Rodimus Prime unite to combat the threat. Finally, Optimus Prime returns from limbo to destroy Galvatron and seal the rift. Over 50 issues worth of storyline ended with a truly epic confrontation.

Issues #215–332

No longer all-color, the UK-originated, five-page black-and-white stories kicked off with "Race with the Devil" in #215 and continued (via mini-epics such as "Aspects of Evil," "The Carnival of Carn" storyline, "Enchantress to Dream Pyre," "End of the Road" (a Furman in-joke for any last story!) in #289. After that, until its demise, the title solely ran classic earlier strips, the final US storylines, and some *G.I. Joe* material.

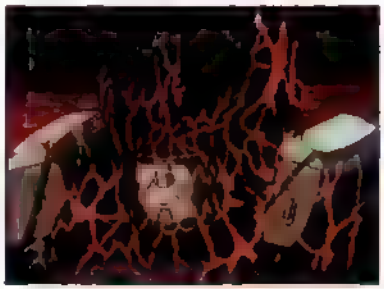
TV SEASONS 3 & 4

TWO SEASONS IN ONE... KEY EPISODES FROM THE FINAL GENERATION 1 TRANSFORMERS TV SERIES

THE 30 EPISODES of Season 3, which aired over two months in late 1986, followed directly on from *Transformers: The Movie* and focused entirely on the future cast. Here, the TV series and the comics go in radically different directions, each establishing their own origin of the TRANSFORMERS. Certainly, Galvatron in the TV series barely resembles the spitting-mad engine of destruction in the comics. Though counted as Season 4, the three-episode "Rebirth" story, which introduces the Headmasters and Targetmasters, is largely an extension of Season 3

"THE FIVE FACES OF DARKNESS" PART 1

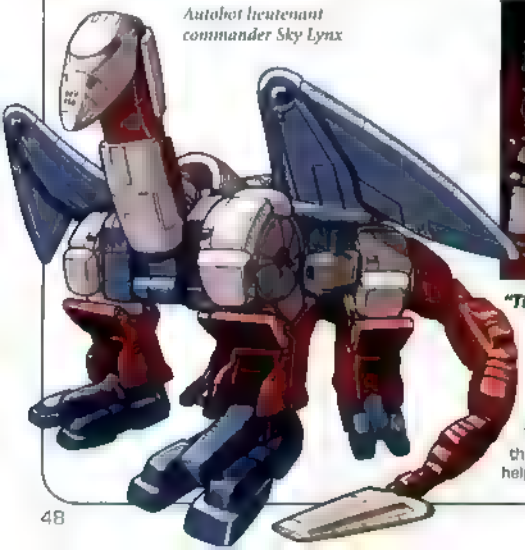
As the leaderless Decepticons fight for energon scraps on the planet Charr, Spike, Kup and Ultra Magnus are kidnapped by raiders. Springer and Arcee set off in pursuit. Perceptor dispatches Blurr and Wheelie to Earth to supply the city-sized TRANSFORMER Metroplex with a new Transformation Cog. Meanwhile, Rodimus Prime and Grimlock scout the Decepticon base on Charr, but are discovered and attacked



"THE FIVE FACES OF DARKNESS" PART 2

Rescued by Springer and Arcee, Rodimus Prime falls into a comalike state and receives a Matrix-induced vision of the five-faced robotic aliens, the Quintessons. Prime recovers and sets course for Quintessa. Meanwhile, Cyclonus and Scourge have recovered Galvatron from the distant planet of Tkrull. In an effort to destroy the Matrix of Leadership, the Quintessons blow up Quintessa and everyone in the vicinity!

Autobot lieutenant commander Sky Lynx

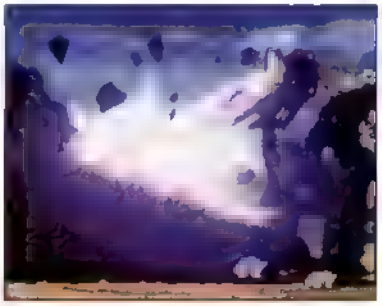


"THE FIVE FACES OF DARKNESS" PART 3

The Autobots escape, but the blast hurls them all into deep space, and they eventually come to rest on the slime-encrusted planet Goo #87398. Back in charge, Galvatron attacks Blurr and Wheelie's shuttle preventing them from delivering the Transformation Cog. The Quintessons recruit the remaining Decepticons and attack the helpless Autobots on Goo #87398

"THE FIVE FACES OF DARKNESS" PART 4

Galvatron attacks the Decepticons, accusing them of disloyalty, allowing the Autobots to escape. The Quintessons strike a deal with Galvatron, offering him the fictional Decepticon Matrix of Leadership, and he agrees to lead a dual attack on Earth and Cybertron. The giant sentient battle platform Trypticon is dispatched to Earth, where Metroplex is still trapped in city mode. Cybertron's defenses are damaged by a decoy attack, allowing a vast armada of Quintesson ships to descend on the planet



"THE FIVE FACES OF DARKNESS" PART 5

Revealed as both the creators of the TRANSFORMERS and their greatest enemies, the Quintessons aim to take back the world they created. Cybertron, Meanwhile, Blurr and Wheelie finally deliver the Transformation Cog, and Metroplex rises to defeat Trypticon. On Cybertron, Galvatron at last realizes he's been duped by the Quintessons, and the Autobots and Decepticons unite to send the invaders packing. The Decepticons return to Charr to plan anew

"STARSCREAM'S GHOST"

Starscream returns as a ghost and seeks revenge on Galvatron (who destroyed his body). He hatches a plan with Octane, a Decepticon hunted by his own forces. Possessing Cyclonus, Starscream is able (under the pretense of capturing Octane) to get close to Galvatron. He sends his executioner into an Autobot ambush, but Galvatron, though badly damaged, escapes. When Galvatron blasts Cyclonus, Starscream retreats into the body of one of the sweeps

"FOREVER IS A LONG TIME COMING"

A Quintesson attempt to open a time window

"GHOST IN THE MACHINE"

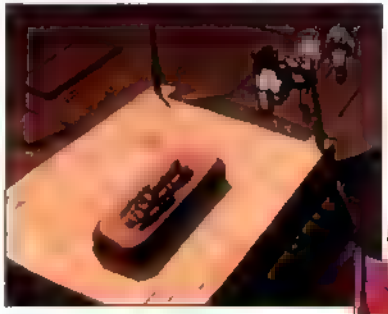
"ONLY HUMAN"

"DARK AWAKENING"

A deep space mausol A
enslaved their former leader Optimus Prim

The Quintessons

In "The Five Faces of Darkness," the full origin of Cybertron and the TRANSFORMERS (as least as far the TV series goes) is revealed. We learn that Cybertron was long ago colonized by the Quintessons, who created two robotic slave/worker lines, one designed for military hardware and the other for consumer goods. Artificially imbued with intelligence, the military and consumer robots soon rebelled, turning on their masters. The Quintessons were driven from Cybertron. Thereafter, the consumer robots (Autobots) crafted a new era of peace, but the military robots (Decepticons) yearned for conquest—and a vast civil war began.



"THE RETURN OF OPTIMUS PRIME" PART 1

"THE RETURN OF OPTIMUS PRIME" PART 2

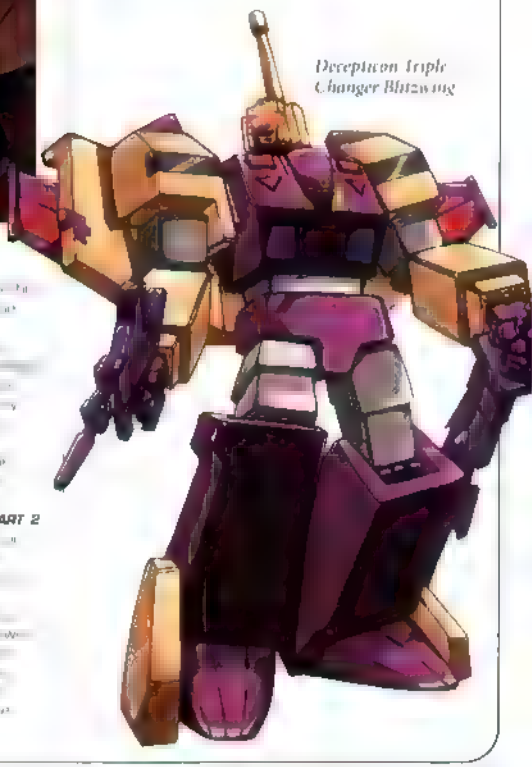
A but Sky Lynx locates a Quintesson eng
Dinobot Prime, but
venomous virus has spread, infecting Rodi
and setting Autobot against Autobot
Goldbug. Sensing the Matrix holds th
the virus, Optimus Prime battl
Optimus Prime and wins it back
power of the Matrix, he cleanses
[illegible]

"THE REBIRTH" PART 1

key, Spike, James, and a tea

"THE REBIRTH" PART 2

"THE REBIRTH" PART 3

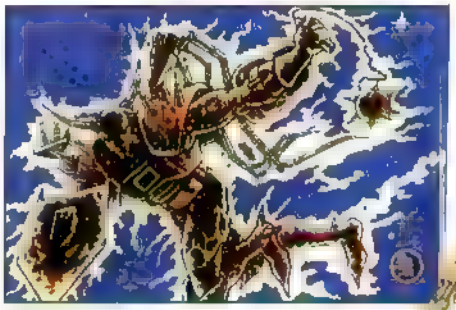


Decepticon Triple Changer Blitzwing

UNICRON

FROM CHAOS COMES ORDER

FIRST SEEN IN *Transformers: The Movie*, Unicron is TRANSFORMERS' ultimate villain. Moving across space and between dimensions, Unicron was committed to the destruction of all life. It crushed and consumed planets and infected the very substance of space itself with a chaotic virus that undid the order of the Universe. When nothing remained, Unicron rested—before moving on to start the process again in one of the countless parallel Universes. The one thing Unicron feared was the Autobot Matrix of Leadership, the life essence of its ancient enemy, Primus, Lord of Light.



THE BIG BANG

Having witnessed the birth of our Universe, an extra-dimensional entity known as The Dire[illegible] created two exploratory heralds, Unicron and Primus. But [illegible] was a [illegible], a [illegible] that ultimately [illegible] to ravage the fledgling Universe. Unicron took on two distinct forms: one mental (projected on the Astral Plain) and one physical (a metal planetoid).

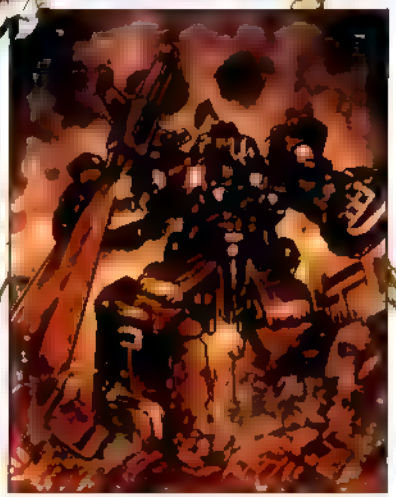
Sodium cobalt claws for deep impact penetration

Early-warning sensory array, sensitive up to 0.2 light-years

Underfoot thrusters

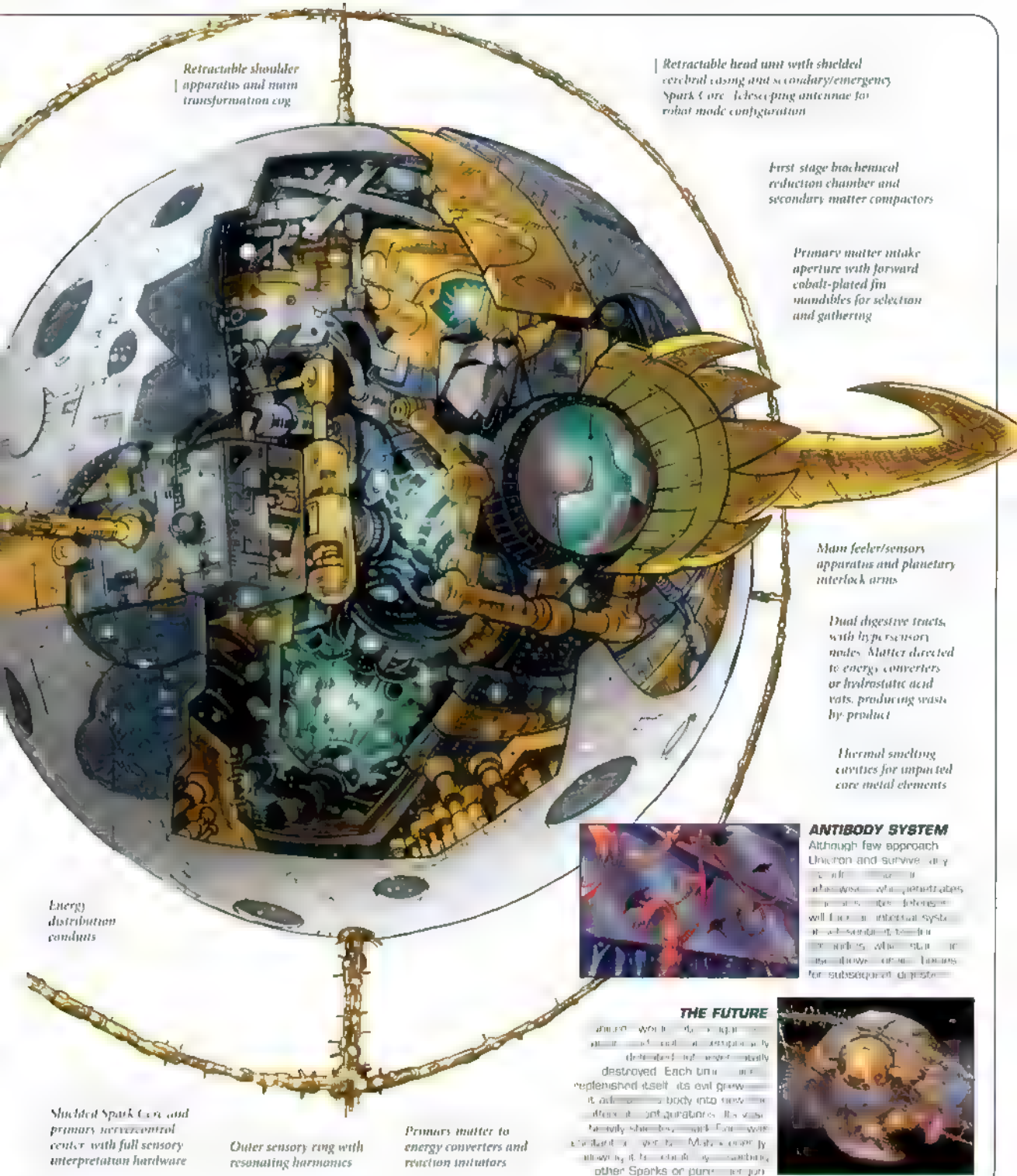
THE FIRST TRANSFORMER

Unicron made startling adaptations to its new physical form, crafting a robot body that mirrored its astral form. Unicron began to consume world after world, reabsorbing the energy that it had lost creating other tainted worlds. In robot mode, it increased its maneuverability and firepower, a response to the one force that could stand against it, Primus.



The Fallen

The many battles against Primus culminated in shocking betrayal. Primus had created a crew of 13 TRANSFORMERS to optimize his defensive and tactical options in planet mode. But one of the 13 had been turned, and had attempted to sabotage Primus' planet mode. The Fallen, as this TRANSFORMER became known, was thwarted, and joined his new master—only to be sucked along with him into a black hole.


Retractable shoulder apparatus and main transformation cog
Retractable head unit with shielded cerebral casing and secondary/emergency Spark Core. Telescoping antennae for robot mode configuration
First stage biochemical reduction chamber and secondary matter compactors
Primary matter intake aperture with forward cobalt-plated fin mandibles for selection and gathering
Main feeler/sensors apparatus and planetary interlock arms
Dual digestive tracts, with hypersensors modes. Matter directed to energy converters or hydrostatic acid vats, producing waste by-product
Thermal smelting cavities for impacted core metal elements
Energy distribution conduits
Shielded Spark Core and primary servocontrol center with full sensory interpretation hardware
Outer sensory ring with resonating harmonics
Primary matter to energy converters and reaction initiators

ANTIBODY SYSTEM

Although few approach Unicron and survive [illegible] will become internal systems [illegible]

THE FUTURE

[illegible] destroyed. Each time [illegible] replenished itself, its evil grew [illegible] other Sparks or pure energon.

QUINTESSONS

CRUEL AND UNUSUAL

THE EXTENT OF the Quintessons' involvement in the creation of the TRANSFORMER race is still largely a matter of conjecture. Certainly these cruel machinist intellects influenced the TRANSFORMERS' early development, and perhaps even attacked and colonized Cybertron at one or more times in its past. The main problem was misinformation. The Quintesson high command—the five-faced judges that preside over witch-hunts and purging inquisitions—thrives on a culture of lies and deceit. Two things, though, are clear. Cybertron is of huge tactical importance to the Quintessons, and they—like Unicron—fear the power of the Matrix (and Primus).

Quintesson judges are in charge, but subspecies of Quintesson do exist, including guards and gatekeepers.

SHARKTICONS

Possessing limited mobility and offensive capabilities, the Quintesson judges rely largely on their feared ground/sea troops, the Sharkticons. The Sharkticons are an enslaved race from a colonized world.

QUINTESSA

The Quintessons are primarily a nomadic race, constantly invading and colonizing new worlds using the savage Sharkticons as battlefield cannon fodder. Ultimately, the Quintessons aim to recreate their homeworld Quintessa on each "host" planet.

WRATH

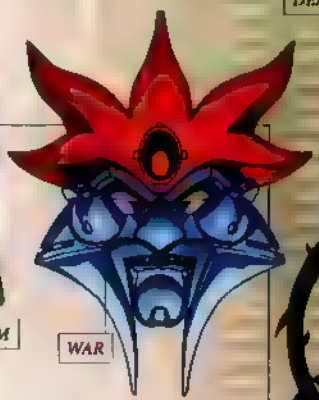
DEATH

JUDGMENT

Low-yield energo tendrils for close-contact combat

Multidirectional antigravity energy beam

WISDOM



WAR

The Five Faces

Each Quintesson judge has five distinct aspects, which together make one whole. Their sole aim is to eliminate potential threats or enemies, and they routinely purge any immediate galactic space. Whether speaking as DEATH, WAR, JUDGMENT, WRATH, or WISDOM, the verdict is generally the same: "guilty!"

PRIMUS

WISE AND MUNIFICENT

BEFORE THE DAWN of time, Order and Chaos existed in perfect harmony within a self-contained entity called The One. Eager to explore the infant Universe, The One created Unicron, and then subdivided its creation into two. That second being was Primus. Both heralds spread their entirety across new planets throughout many realities, seeding the future. But as Primus gained sentience, he realized that Unicron had become a force for Chaos, destroying all they had created. Wise and in touch with all living things, Primus became the champion of Order, vowing to safeguard the Universe

THE ASTRAL PLANE

The battle between Pri[illegible] 5 Dog, is not only in the physical [illegible] but also [illegible] distance [illegible] Few [illegible] are truly fewer still able to direct their [illegible] usness through it. Damage inflicted on the astral plane [illegible] y the [illegible] result [illegible] down.

Though depicted here, Primus has never been seen, recorded, or otherwise captured in robot mode. (His astral aspect resembles Rodimus Prime.)

Robot Mode

Assuming the role of protector of the Universe Primus used the energy The One had given him to attack Unicron directly, the former twin forces clashing explosively and repeatedly. Like Unicron, Primus possessed two modes (planet and robot), but only rarely assumed his robot mode, wishing rather to be a part of the Universe, connected on a planetary level to its ebbs and flows. Instead Primus passed his transformation abilities onto the beings he created the TRANSFORMERS

INTELLIGENCE 10 | ENDURANCE 10
SPEED 10 | SKILL 10 | STRENGTH 10
COURAGE 10 | RANK 10 | FIREPOWER 10

SPECIAL TEAMS

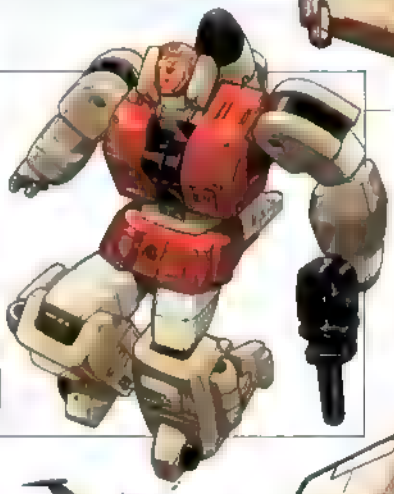
THE SECOND GENERATION OF COMBINED ROBOTS

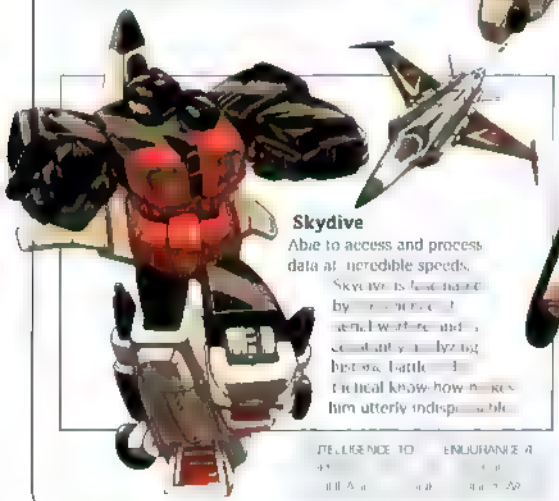
THE SPECIAL TEAMS grew out of the "mass intellect" experiments that had created the giant combined robot Devastator (*see pages 32–33*). Autobot scientists managed to get their hands on the Combiner blueprints, and the result was the Aerialbots, who formed Superion, and the Protectobots, who formed Defensor. Both robots had revolutionary compartmentalized brains that could maintain the integrity of individual brain-wave patterns while drawing on each for an integrated whole. The Decepticons created their own Special Teams, the Combaticons and the Stunticons.

Superion can fly at speeds of up to 800 mph (1,280 km/h).

Slingshot

The [illegible] slowest of the Aerialbots, Slingshot wraps his [illegible] in the guise of a brash braggart. [illegible] for the successes of others, [illegible] nevertheless a skilled shot and shooter.





Skydive

Able to access and process data at incredible speeds, Skydive is [illegible] by [illegible] and well-versed in [illegible] analyzing historic battles for tactical know-how makes him utterly indispensable.

[illegible] INTELLIGENCE TO [illegible] ENDURANCE AT [illegible]

SUPERION

Superion's clarity of thought and [illegible] minded intent make him the polar opposite of Devastator—though his approach can be almost too simplistic and his demeanor sometimes aloof and cold. Superion distills his battle approach down to two simple goals: destroy Decepticons, protect [illegible]

[illegible]

Fireflight
Unable to keep his mind on his work, Fireflight is sometimes a flight hazard, his mind full of childlike wonder instead of formation mechanics. However, his light wave–distorting photon-displacer gun is a valuable asset.

INTELLIGENCE 5	ENDURANCE 8
SPEED 8	SKILL 3
COURAGE 8	RANK 8
	STRENGTH 7
	FIREPOWER 7

Defensor
The combined mode of the Protectobots (Blades, Groove, Streetwise, Hot Spot, and First Aid). Defensor can allow emotion to get the better of battlefield logic: he will fight until his last drop of fuel is exhausted to safeguard a single life-form.

Ionizer sword slices through any known metal

Silverbolt
For the team leader of the Aerialbots, a fear of heights can only be a severe drawback. But Silverbolt gamely controls his phobia, forcing his concern for others to outweigh his own safety.

INTELLIGENCE 8	ENDURANCE 8
SPEED 8	SKILL 8
COURAGE 8	RANK 8
	STRENGTH 8
	FIREPOWER 8

Menasor
The five Stunticons (Motormaster, Dead End, Breakdown, Drag Strip, and Wreckinder) combine to form Menasor—a mass-intellect mess of psychological instabilities and violent tendencies. One of the most feared beings in Cybertron, Menasor can be a single-minded engine of destruction—when he ignores the competing voices in his head. Likely to last out, Menasor is a danger to ally as well as enemy.

INTELLIGENCE 7	ENDURANCE 8
SPEED 8	SKILL 8
COURAGE 8	RANK 8
	STRENGTH 8
	FIREPOWER 8

Air Raid
"Gung-ho" best describes Air Raid. Of all the Aerialbots, he's invariably the first to throw himself into battle, delighting in the chaos that inevitably ensues. His conviction is that thinking too much would make him a liability—and this is about as "deep" as Air Raid gets.

Bruticus
In contrast to Menasor, Bruticus is the product of measured multifaceted might. The merging of the combiner teams Brawl, Swindle, Blast Off, Vortex, and Onslaught has an unparalleled power single-track, success. Bruticus is renowned for simply following orders (a rarity in the Decepticon forces). But in terms of taking the initiative, forget it. He'll simply stop dead on the battlefield to await his next command.

HEADMASTERS AND TARGETMASTERS

POSSIBLY THE STRANGEST evolution of the TRANSFORMER race came when a group of Autobots, led by Fortress Maximus, grew weary of civil war and left Cybertron. While other key Autobots lay deactivated within the Ark on Earth, Fortress Maximus set course for Nebulon, a planet light-years in the opposite direction. The humanlike inhabitants, the Nebulans, reacted aggressively to the new arrivals. To stop the crisis from escalating, the Autobots transferred their mental faculties to a secondary neural processor and removed their heads. Virtually helpless, the Autobots could only hope that their hosts would accept this surrender.

SCORPONOK

Suspecting that Fortress Maximus had left Cybertron in search of power or allies, Decepticon sub-Commander Scorponok followed him. Unknown to all but himself, Scorponok's violent image masked the soul of a noble warrior, with Cybertron's long-term interests at heart. Still, Scorponok and his Decepticon raiding party attacked Nebulon, causing untold chaos. Nebulan leader Galen turned to Fortress Maximus, aware that only an alliance could save them. But it was to be an alliance like no other.

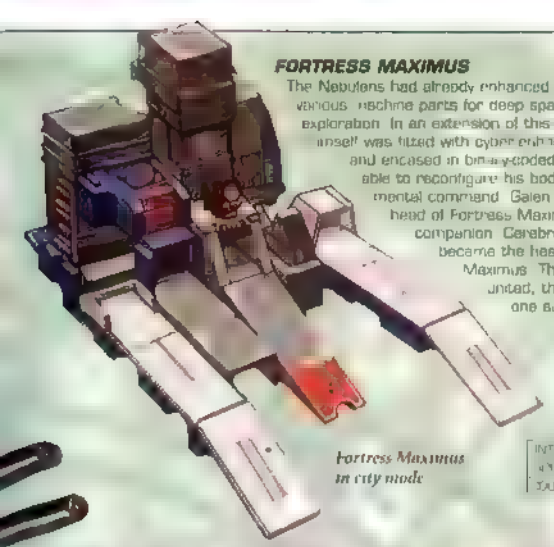
Scorpion mode

City mode

Nebulan agitator Lord Zarak binary bonds with Scorponok

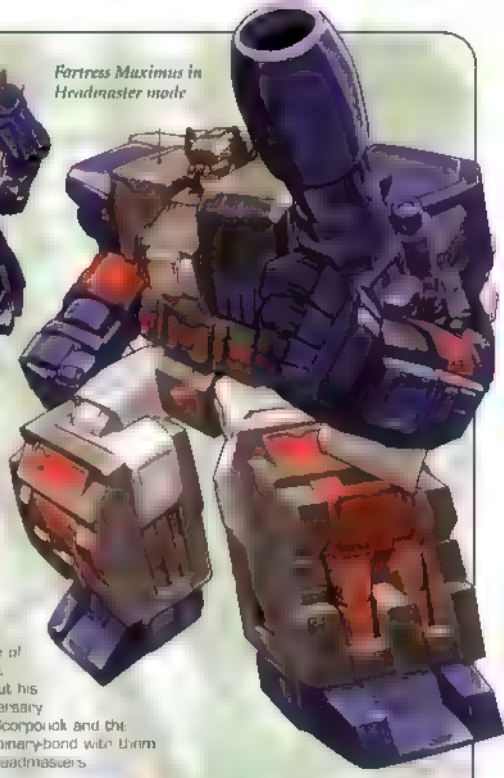
FORTRESS MAXIMUS

The Nebulans had already enhanced their bodies with various mechanic parts for deep space or undersea exploration. In an extension of this process, Galen himself was fitted with cyber-enhanced body parts and encased in binary-coded armor. Now able to reconfigure his body with a simple mental command, Galen became the head of Fortress Maximus' robotic companion Cerebros, who in turn became the head of Fortress Maximus. The two were now united, their minds melded into one super-sophisticated whole.



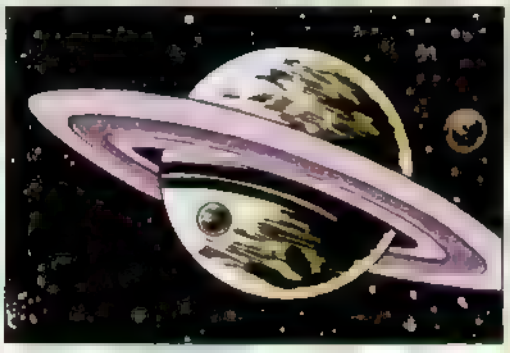
Fortress Maximus in city mode

Fortress Maximus in Headmaster mode



Galen in full Headmaster binary armor, before his transformation to head mode

INTELLIGENCE 10		ENDURANCE 9	
SPEED 6	SKILL 9	STRENGTH 10	
COURAGE 10	RANK 10	FIREPOWER 10	



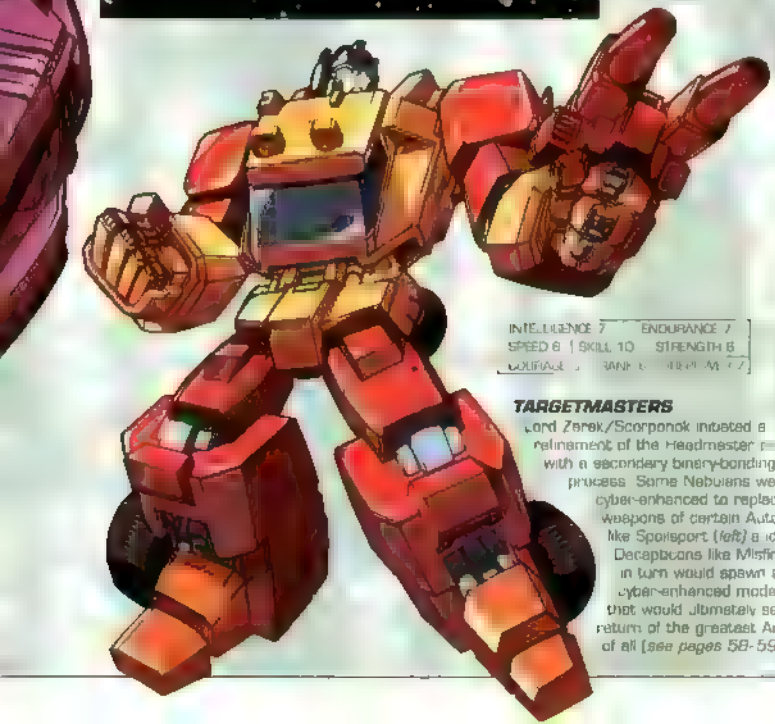
NEW WAVE

Now dubbed Autobot Headmasters, Fortress Maximus, Highbrow, Brainstorm, Chromedome and others turned the tide of the battle on Nebulon. But Galen had reckoned without his power-hungry political adversary Lord Zarak, who offered Scorponok and the Decepticons a chance to binary-bond with them, creating the Decepticon Headmasters.

Sureshot's Targetmaster companion, Spoilsport

Exit Galen, Enter Spike

After years of battle, Galen/Cerebros/Fortress Maximus feared that Nebulon ultimately would be destroyed, so he decided to take the Decepticons away from the planet. By now, the Autobots had awakened on Earth, and it was there that Fortress Maximus took the battle. One casualty was Galen himself, forced to sacrifice himself to save the others, and he fell to human Spike Witwicky to replace him.



INTELLIGENCE 7		ENDURANCE 7	
SPEED 6	SKILL 10	STRENGTH 6	
COURAGE [illegible]	RANK [illegible]	FIREPOWER 7	

TARGETMASTERS

Lord Zarak/Scorponok initiated a refinement of the Headmaster process with a secondary binary-bonding process. Some Nebulans were cyber-enhanced to replace the weapons of certain Autobots like Spoilsport (*left*) and Decepticons like Misfire. This in turn would spawn a third cyber-enhanced mode, one that would ultimately see the return of the greatest Autobot of all (*see pages 58-59*).

Spoilsport in Targetmaster binary armor, before his transformation to weapon mode

Vehicle mode

POWERMASTER PRIME

THE MANY DEATHS AND REBIRTHS OF OPTIMUS PRIME

IN THE DIVERSE and often contradictory realities that make up the TRANSFORMERS "multiverse," there is one tragic constant: Optimus Prime will die at some point, often more than once! There is, of course, one core TRANSFORMERS timeline, but in and around that are the "what ifs" and "maybes"—parallel realities that diverge from the established flow of events. In one such divergent reality, Optimus Prime is killed in a bizarre virtual showdown with Megatron, and his brain waves and personality are preserved digitally. He is ultimately recreated by Nebulan science in a new, more powerful body, as Powermaster Prime.

WINNING COMBINATION

In his ultimate incarnation, Prime is binary bonded to Nebulan scientist and engineer Hi-Q (*see opposite page*). Hi-Q oversees all of Optimus Prime's power needs (whether in robot or vehicle mode), routing power directly to whichever system requires it the most at any given moment. This provides not only extreme economy in terms of fuel consumption but also hyperefficiency and control in combat or pursuit situations. Hi-Q also serves as a secondary pilot and gunner in vehicle mode.

Hi-Q in binary bonded engine mode

GAME OVER!

Optimus Prime's showdown with Megatron was [illegible] and within a [illegible] Dreadnought master program [illegible] Edison Zachary, the Mega World game developer [illegible] was [illegible] to [illegible] real-world conflict [illegible] Megatron allowed Zachary to download their personalities [illegible] Whoever lost the virtual battle would ultimately forfeit their life in the [illegible] world. Though Prime initially [illegible] Megatron [illegible] the system [illegible] destroyed Prime in both virtual and real worlds. However, Zachary had secretly saved Prime's brain wave patterns to disk.

Hi-Q transforms into engine mode

Secondary "super-powered robot" exostructure

Hi-Q: Architect of Powermaster Prime

Fortress Maximus instructed Gordian to take the disk containing Prime's brain wave patterns to Nebulon. However a Nebulan scientist named Hi-Q had taken steps to ensure that Nebulon was now out of bounds for all TRANSFORMERS. But when Hi-Q's fellow scientists [illegible] universe-bound by revolutionary [illegible] Hi-Q responded by creating his own Powermaster Optimus Prime.

DEAD AGAIN!

The Powermaster process [illegible] and Optimus Prime [illegible] Autobot [illegible] Earth. The planet [illegible] The Powermaster [illegible] Prime was [illegible] Megatron, the TRANSFORMERS [illegible] Prime, Hi-Q [illegible] to destroy the chaos bringer.

A NEW REBIRTH

With Prime dead, Hi-Q became progressively unstable, believing that the Autobot leader lived on in his mind. Those around him assumed that the death of Prime had driven him mad, but a strange quirk of the Powermaster process had indeed bonded the two intellects. Through the ancient Cybertronian power of "the Last Autobot," Hi-Q was reborn once more as one being with Prime.

Attack Vehicle/Robot Mode

Powermaster Prime is actually two robots in one. His cab section transforms into one robot mode, but cab and trailer can combine to form a super-powered robot mode.

Twin particle beam cannons and concussion blasters

Base Mode

Prime's trailer section opens out into a mobile repair base with repair bay, power transfer facilities and battle station equipments. It can provide reserve power for an entire Autobot battalion for up to 24 hours before needing replenishment.

PRETENDERS

ROBOTS IN DISGUISE... IN DISGUISE

THE PRETENDER SHELL is an innovative TRANSFORMER stealth and infiltration mode. The outer biomechanical shell, created from proto-fused genetic matter (with a liquid metal base), makes the TRANSFORMER within undetectable and allows him to pass as an organic being, while also granting increased durability. The segmented carapace can be shed in moments in response to a simple mental command, allowing the TRANSFORMER to gain an element of surprise in combat situations. Pretender shells can also be remotely operated, providing a dual attack option. However, injuries sustained by the shell are also felt by its operator, and severe damage can result in mental paralysis.

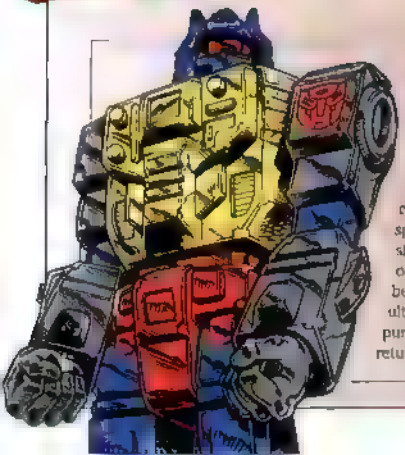
CLOUDBURST

Out of his Pretender shell, Cloudburst is highly introverted, being timid, insecure, and lacking in self-confidence, barely able to muster a "hello" inside his Pretender shell, however, Cloudburst completely reinvents himself. Aggressive, brash, and roguishly charming, he is the polar opposite of his real self. In Pretender mode, Cloudburst wields an electrified "lightning" whip and thunder cannon. His inner robot can convert into an interplanetary cruiser.

Interior robot mode

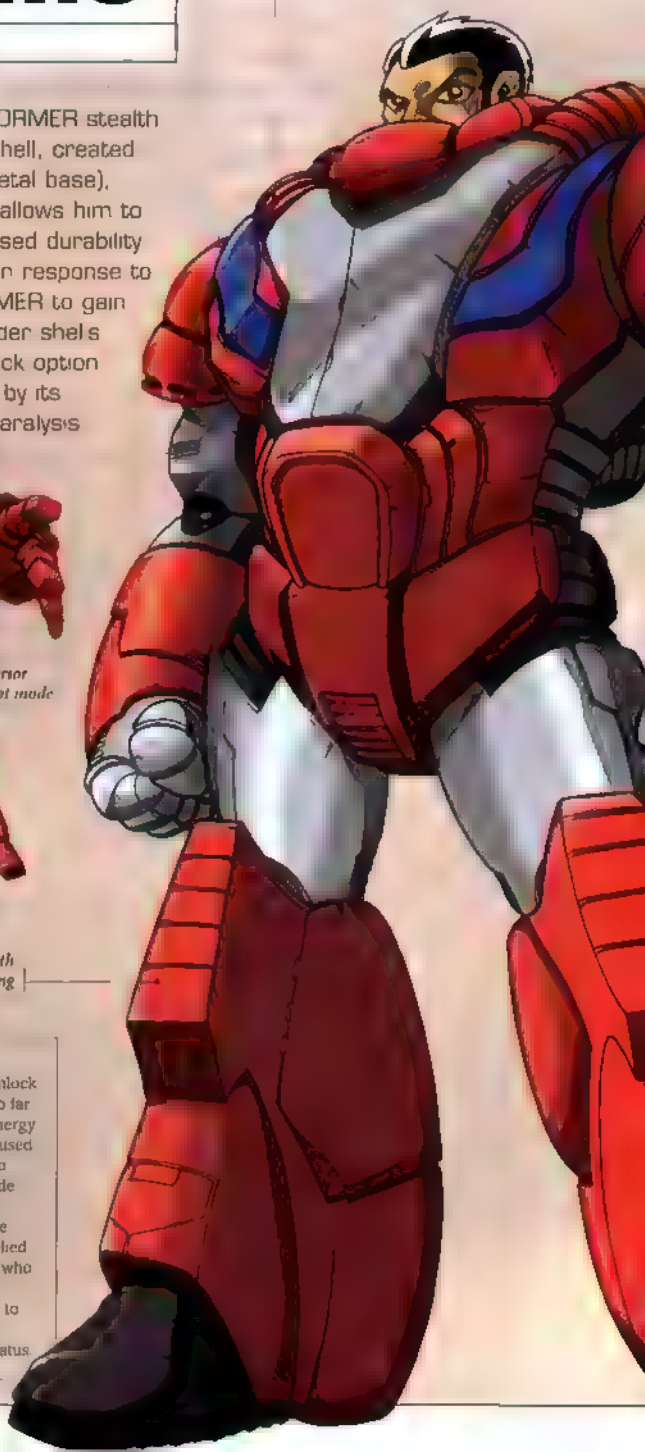
Space cruiser mode

Space-Defense Pretender Shell with thermostatic plating



Action Masters

Some TRANSFORMERS, like Grimlock (*left*), took an evolutionary step too far following an infusion of a rogue energy source known as Nucleon. This caused their transformation mechanisms to fuse, stripping them of their alt. mode capability. The tradeoff was greater speed, strength, and endurance. In the short term, these "Action Masters" relied on transforming mini-robot partners, who became weapons or accessories. But ultimately, most Action Masters chose to purge the Nucleon from their systems, returning them to normal operational status.



Warrior-Grade Pretender Shell with ambient stealth field

Interior robot mode

Tank mode

INTELLIGENCE 8		ENDURANCE 9
SPEED 2	SKILL 10	STRENGTH 8
COURAGE 9	RANK 8	FIREPOWER 7

BLUDGEON

A committed adherent to the dark forces at work in the TRANSFORMERS universe, Bludgeon follows a strict warrior's code. Versed in a potent mix of mysticism and arcane knowledge, Bludgeon wields forces that go beyond the normal definition of science. Silent, watchful and aloof, Bludgeon is feared by many and trusted by few. He is a practitioner of and expert in the Cybertronian martial art of Metalikato, a discipline that demands a high degree of mental prowess and control. His secondary tank mode employs an electro-fireball cannon.

Predator-Class Pretender Shell with energo-battle ax

V.T.O.L. Hovercraft mode

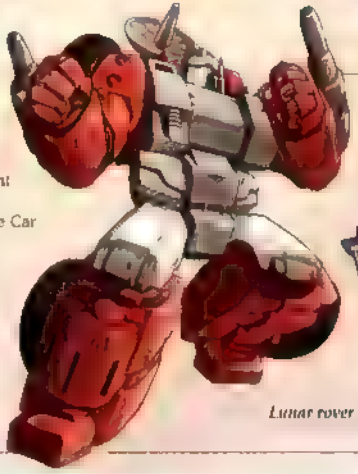
BOMB-BURST

The ultimate predator, Bomb-Burst delights in his reputation as a lone hunter. It is rumored that he drains his victims of life-giving energon, leaving only a mangled husk behind, a practice that further elevates his almost mythical status among his fellow Decepticons. In Pretender mode, Bomb-Burst's specially designed fangs can pierce metal and access internal energon storage cells. His hovercraft mode is almost completely silent, allowing for swift, stealthy attacks.

INTELLIGENCE 8		ENDURANCE 4
SPEED 7	SKILL 8	STRENGTH 8
COURAGE 9	RANK 7	FIREPOWER 7

Micromasters

A new wave of TRANSFORMERS joined the fray during the latter stages of the Earth wars. These tried and true warriors were downsized to create a front line of energy-efficient combat teams. Autobot Micromasters included the Race Car Patrol (reconnaissance), Off Road Patrol (covert activities), Battle Patrol (rapid strike deployment) and Rescue Patrol (search and rescue). They were joined by Micromaster base commanders, such as Countdown (*right*), who possessed extensive backup facilities, accessible via remote linkup. The Decepticons, naturally, responded with their own Micromaster teams.



Lunar rover mode

INTELLIGENCE 10		ENDURANCE 8
SPEED 10	SKILL 10	STRENGTH 8
COURAGE 10	RANK 8	FIREPOWER 8

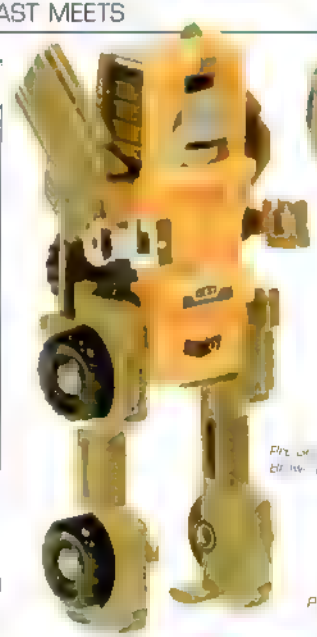
Launch pad

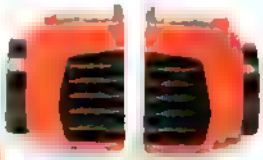
Base

JAPANESE G1 TOYS

EAST MEETS WEST MEETS EAST MEETS

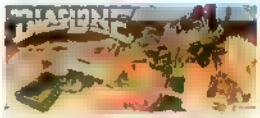
THE FORTUNES AND histories of two toy companies, one American one Japanese were intricately interwoven in the creation of the TRANSFORMERS toy line. In the early 1970s, US toy manufacturer Hasbro licensed its line of G.I. Joe action figures to Japanese toy giant Takara. Motivated by the popularity in Japan of robot figures, Takara turned the G.I. Joe toy mold into a transparent cyborg figure. This was scaled down to become the Microman line, and then the revolutionary transforming Diaclone "Car Robot" series Finally, in the early 1980s, Takara released its New Microman line (with its Microchange subseries), adding the further refinement of robots that transformed into non-car modes At which point, Hasbro stepped in again





Micro Cars

The Diaclone series Takara's first foray into transforming car/robots licensed in the transformers phenomenon that followed in the wake of the car. The Car Robots combined licensed vehicles which were made smaller and sportier with built motors. Modified versions of these Diaclone cars really appeared in the US, where they were known as Penny Racers. The first Microchange variations on the Diaclone cars formed the basis of many of the eventual TRANSFORMERS mini-vehicles



Microman/Microchange "Blazing"

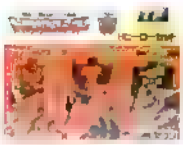
Gun mode

Microman

The next variation of the Diaclone Car Robots was the introduction of the New Microman line. While keeping many of the established characters, the Microman/Microchange sub-line introduced a new cast of robots that transformed into a wide range of other items, from secret agent-style handguns to cassette players (plus cassettes), to microscopes and binoculars, and other variations. The lines expanded to include robots that would be the forerunners of many classic TRANSFORMERS characters, including dinosaur variations and insect variations, and even early triple-changers/jump-starters.

Robot mode

Fortress Maximus



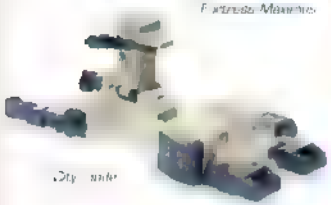
Packaging

TRANSFORMERS Junior

The exchange of ideas and toy molds between Hasbro and Takara continued well beyond the launch of the initial Generation 1 toys. The companies worked closely on new brand concepts and launches, including the radical Headmasters/Targetmasters line. Takara released some of these characters as part of their TRANSFORMERS Junior gift set, a three-toy pack that contained smaller, simplified versions of characters such as Fortress Maximus and Chromedome. The Optimus Prime toy came complete with a cardboard trailer!

Chromedome (robot mode)

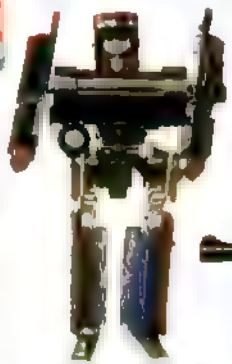
Vehicle mode



City mode

Optimus Prime

Vehicle mode



Black version (robot mode)

Weapon attachments

Silver/gray version (gun mode)

Black version (gun mode)

01 Convoy

Known in the original Diaclone toy line as "Battle Convoy," the first Japanese edition of Optimus Prime, released in 1984, was renamed "01 Convoy" but was otherwise identical to his US counterpart. The Convoy name would come to be associated with many later Japanese "Autobot leader" toys. 01 Convoy was the only first-wave Japanese TRANSFORMERS toy not to be given a straightforward vehicle-mode designation detailing the specific vehicle on which it was modeled.

01 Convoy (in pack)

Silver/gray version

Megatron

Part of the original Takara Microman/Microchange line, the Megatron toy mold first appeared in 1980, released in a black version. Modeled on the Walther P-38 gun, this early version was followed by a silver/gray variation (later revived as the E-Hobby Megaplex redeco/reissue of Megatron), and then a special (still pre-G1) U.N.C.L.E. edition, with various attachments (silencer, stock extension, etc.). This latter version would become the basis of the TRANSFORMERS Megatron.

Black version (in pack)

Silver/gray version (in pack)

GENERATION 1 TOYS

DIACLONE AND MICROMAN—TRANSFORM!

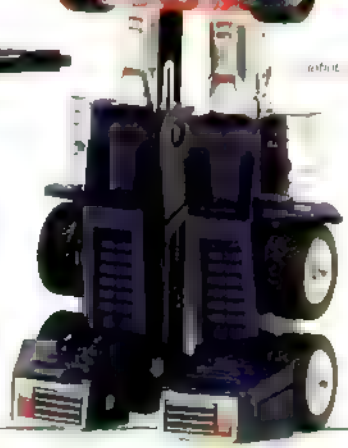
IN 1984, the toy giant Hasbro secured the rights to Takara's combining-toy concepts, unifying their Diaclone and Microman lines into one cohesive brand TRANSFORMERS. The tiny human pilots that sat in Diaclone's original toys were gone, and the toys were now divided into two groups: ground vehicles and airborne craft (plus handheld objects and weapons). Hasbro worked with writers at Marvel Comics (*see pages 40–43*) to flesh out the background mythology to the saga, pitting the heroic Autobots against the evil Decepticons. Toys came complete with glossy pack art, a motto, and "tech specs" detailing each character's personality, strengths, and weaknesses.

Megatron

This mold was originally part of the Japanese Microman/Microchange line. The colored and upgraded US version was released as Megatron and came with a wealth of extra accessories, including a gun sight, silencer, and stock extension. One aspect of the original toy was ditched in order to comply with US safety regulations. Diaclone's Megatron could fire caps from its barrel projectiles.

Optimus Prime

Originally a Diaclone Freightliner COE Dual-Axle semi truck known as Battle Convoy (a name it continued using in some incarnations), Optimus Prime was three toys in one. His trailer opened up into a base/command deck, complete with secondary vehicle unit. Robot. The Diaclone version was just a bit smaller and could be used to store the Optimus vehicle mode.

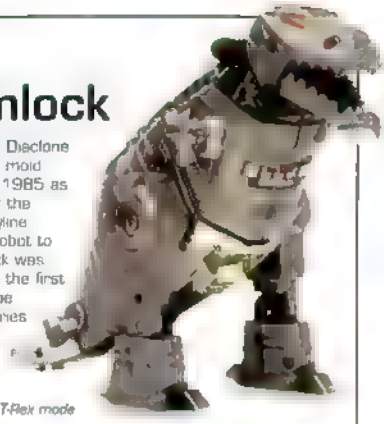


Jet mode

Robot mode

Grimlock

Based on an original Diaclone Robo Tyrannosaurus mold Grimlock debuted in 1985 as part of series two of the TRANSFORMERS toyline Transforming from robot to T-Rex mode Grimlock was one of five Dinobots the first official subgroup to be introduced Accessories included an energo- sword and galaxa- rocket launcher



T-Rex mode

Robot mode

Detachable fist

Original packaging (Japanese version)

Starscream

Remolded from the original Diaclone F-15 Jet Robo Starscream was the first line of Decepticon supersonic fighterjet toys Essentially, the toy was one of three (later six, virtually identical molds which were operated as Skywarp and Thundercracker Two variant Starscream toys exist one with blue triggers (matching the detachable fists) and one with black

Robot mode (front view)

Robot mode (back view)

Galvatron

As TRANSFORMERS entered 1986 and toy series three new 'bots were introduced that were no longer simply rewrites of Diaclone/Microman molds Galvatron (inspired by designs from *Transformers: The Movie*) was envisioned as a future Megatron and sported extra features such as electronic sounds lights in its gun eyes and crown and two distinct alternate modes

Original packaging

Laser pistol mode

Laser rifle mode

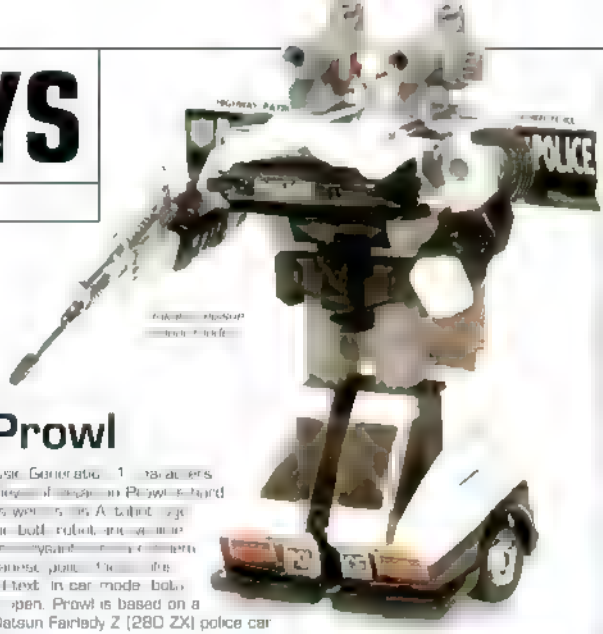
Laser rifle mode

Weapon accessory

OTHER G1 TOYS

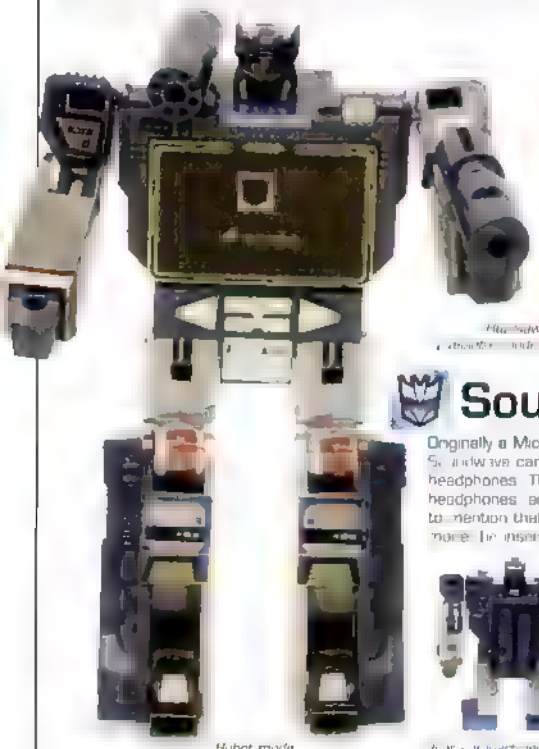
BIGGER, BETTER, FASTER

THE SHEER RANGE and diversity of Generation 1 toys produced in the 1980s and early 1990s is truly staggering. Aside from the classic G1 characters, there are Special Teams, Triple Changers, Headmasters and Targetmasters, Pretenders, Action Masters, Micromasters, Terrorcons Technobots, Firecons, Seacons Triggerbots/Triggercons, Sparkabots—and more! In all, nine TRANSFORMERS toy series were produced over eight years Right up until the start of Generation 2 in 1993, Hasbro continued to issue new or remolded toys under the G1 banner The toys presented on these pages are good examples of Hasbro/Takara at their most innovative and inventive



Prowl

Of the basic Generation 1 characters [illegible] Prowl's hard to beat. As well as his A bullet [illegible] he has [illegible] both robot and vehicle modes. His [illegible] of the Japanese police [illegible] stripes and text. In car mode, both side doors open. Prowl is based on a Diaclone Datsun Fairlady Z (280 ZX) police car



Slag

Dinobots remain prime examples of beast-mode TRANSFORMERS Slag came complete with his own pilot, except this days, as a Diaclone Dinosaur Robo Triceratops—but no pilot

Soundwave

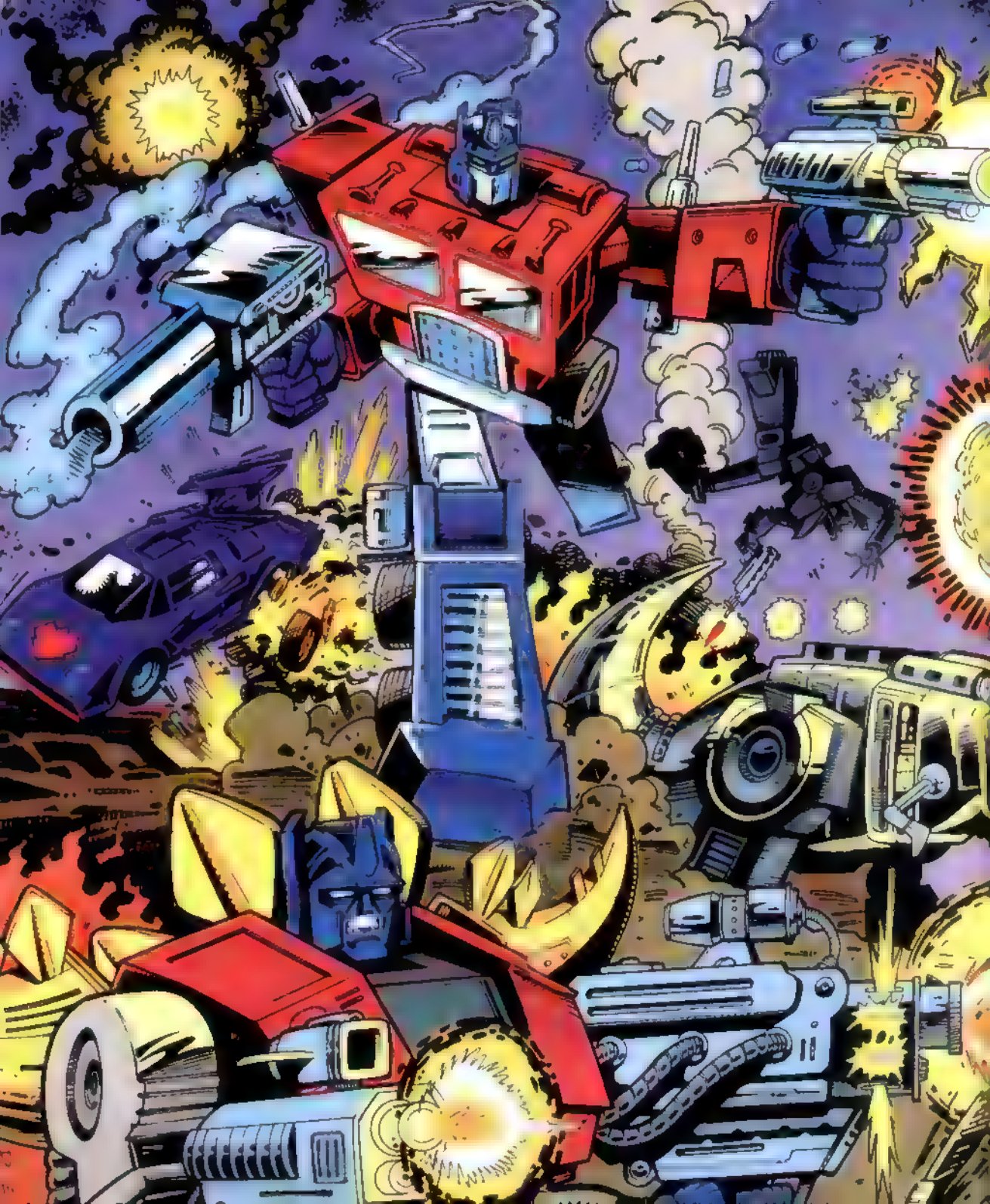
Originally a Microchange Cassettenaut the pre-G1 Soundwave came with a Micros Cassette Robot headphones The US version [illegible] with a cassette or headphones and strangely, the instructions neglected to mention that the weapons could [illegible] more be inserted into the ear battery compartment

Defensor

Scorponok

Metroplex

Weapon accessory



GENERATION 2

BY 1993, HASBRO had finally drawn a line under Generation 1 and launched a new series of toys under the banner "Generation 2." Many of the initial toys were recolored versions of classic characters, with further waves branching out in newer styles and subgroups. A comic book was launched, and the G1 TV series was reshown with new CGI intro sequences. The Generation 2 line went back to basics, relying on the popularity of core characters like Optimus Prime and a revamped Megatron to fire the hearts and minds of a new generation of kids.

TRANSFORMERS

VERSUS G.I. JOE

THE ULTIMATE TEAM-UP

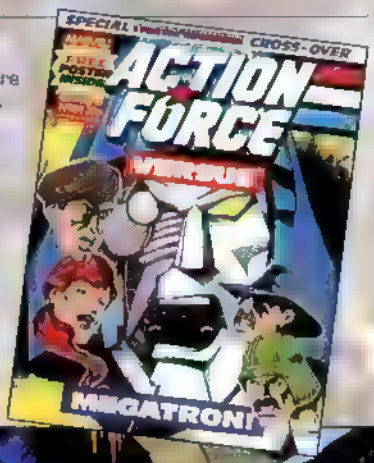
GIVEN THEIR SHARED toy company parentage, added to which both comic books were published by Marvel Comics, it was perhaps inevitable that antiterrorist group G.I. Joe would feature alongside TRANSFORMERS in a crossover story. The four-issue *G.I. Joe and the Transformers* series began an enduring TRANSFORMERS trend: the respective factions (Autobots and G.I. Joe/Decepticons and Cobra) clashing no fewer than five times in a variety of locations, situations and generations. Despite the size differences, the team-up relationship blossomed, extending through Marvel (US and UK) to the Dreamwave era, and even kick-starting the TRANSFORMERS: Generation 2 saga in late 1993.

ISSUE #1

The first official crossover story between TRANSFORMERS and G.I. Joe began with issue #1 of *G.I. Joe and the Transformers* in January 1987. The script was by Michael Higgins, with art by Joe mainstay Herb Trimpe.

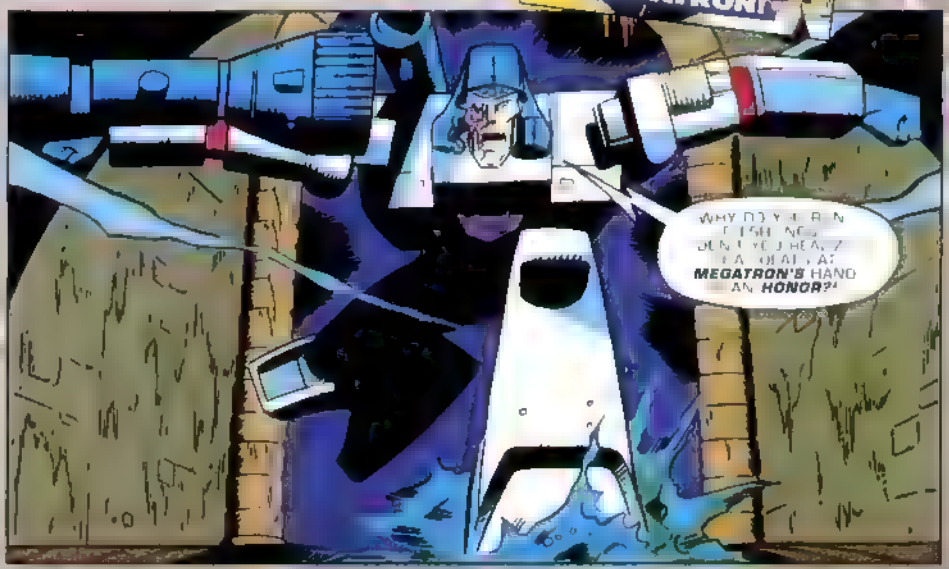
G.I. JOE AND THE TRANSFORMERS

Generally, fans of both TRANSFORMERS and G.I. Joe are united on one front: the pairing got off to a shaky start with the initial series. The story was routine: the Decepticons, out to steal yet another power station, become embroiled first with Cobra (the Joes' venomous nemeses) and then G.I. Joe. In addition, TRANSFORMERS continuity was ignored. Plot events like Bumblebee's destruction and Bombshell's capture simply couldn't be reconciled with the core continuity.



ACTION FORCE

In the UK, G.I. Joe toys and comic books were renamed Action Force. Characters such as Flint and Lady Jaye became the named leads (rather than Hawk and Scarlett), although these two still featured), but otherwise it was business as usual.



ANCIENT RELICS

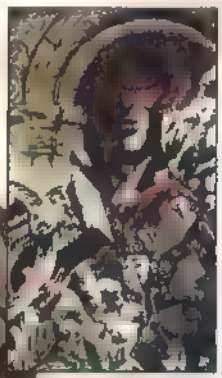
Marvel UK's own intercompanies story, "Ancient Relics," featured a full-blown firefight between Flint's Action Force and Autobots Grimlock and Blades. Set in London, it generated its own share of continuity troubles by including Megatron (M.I.A. in the US series) and Centurion (no longer, it seemed, controlled by Professor Morris, *see page 45*)—though both sink in the Thames River at the close of action.

Yo, Joe (Redux)

Most recently, two new TRANSFORMERS/G.I. Joe team-ups have surfaced courtesy of Dreamwave, the current holder of the TRANSFORMERS comic book license, and Devil's Due (publishers of the new G.I. Joe comics). The Devil's Due crossover hit the stands first, in June, featured an alternate-reality tale chronicling Cobra's onslaught of strike against mankind and armed with their usually reliable army of Decepticons.

Doomsday, 1939

Dreamwave's take on G.I. Joe sets the action just before the outbreak of World War II. Not only are the core Joes recast as WWII infantry men rather than anti-terrorist group, but the TRANSFORMERS also get eye-catching makeovers—Ravage is a hand-grenade, Grimlock a WWII tank, and so on. With retro-designs by Don Figueroa (*Transformers: The War Within*) and moody art by Jae Lee (*Inhumans*), this was a bold departure from the norm.



Prelude to G2

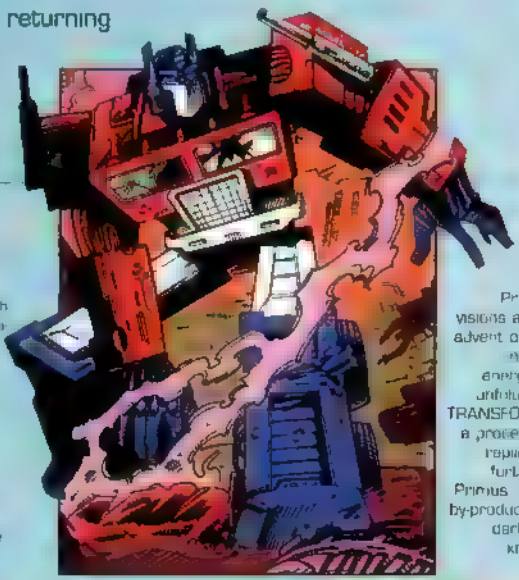
While both the alternate-reality Devil's Due story and Dreamwave's WWII-based crossover served as kind of prologue to another crossover, the purpose of G.I. Joe #1 was the closest to being essential in terms of series continuity. With rumors about the TRANSFORMERS Generation 2 and dedicated G2 comic, with Getaway from Marvel, but G.I. Joe was where the saga actually began. *(see pages 72-73)*

G.I. Joe's Snake Eyes (left) and Scarlet (right) assemble alongside a WWII variant Prime in Dreamwave's saga.

G2 COMICS

WIDESCREEN TRANSFORMERS FOR A NEW GENERATION

THE LAUNCH PAD for Generation 2 was a four-part story that appeared in *G.I. Joe* issues #139–142 (published in 1993), in which the elite antiterrorist unit is reunited with the TRANSFORMERS. Setting out to inject new life into the brand Hasbro had returned to basics, stripping away the gimmicks and pushing the classic and best-loved Autobots and Decepticons to the forefront once more. Redesigned, reworked, and largely reimagined for a new wave of fans, the hope was to recreate the runaway success of Generation 1. A companion Marvel comic series was duly launched, with writer Simon Furman returning for a new tour of duty, following Larry Hama's work on the *G.I. Joe* segment.



DARK DESIGNS

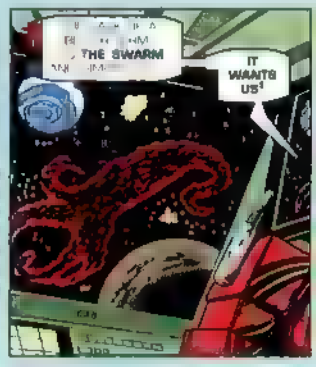
Transformers: Generation 2 began with a full-blown battle on a world that series-villain Jhiaxus is "mechatomizing" (a process by which organic planets are turned into mini Cybertrons). Optimus Prime already plagued by visions of some dark apocalypse, comes to realize that all his previous struggles throughout Generation 1 are but one tiny piece of a much bigger picture. Jhiaxus (a Cybertronian not an Autobot or a Decepticon) tells a crushed Prime that they left Cybertron and its civil war behind years ago and have created a truly universal dynasty in the meantime.

ISSUE #1

Launched in November 1993, the first issue of *Transformers: Generation 2* appeared in a standard and a deluxe edition, both with art by Derek Yaniger.

THE SWARM

Prime's Matrix-induced visions are made real by the advent of the Swarm, a dark mass of all-consuming energy. As the G2 series unfolds, we learn that the TRANSFORMER race grew by a process similar to cellular replication, but it spread further than its creator Primus intended. An energy by-product was spawned, the dark force that became known as the Swarm.



G.I. Joe #139–142

Megatron discovers Cobra's multi-mode castle by accident. He strikes a deal with the group's leader, Cobra Commander, and is refitted with a new, more powerful body. The Ark is relocated to the Cobra-controlled town of Millerville, where its technology is to be studied by weapons expert (and double agent) Dr. Biggles-Jones. G.I. Joe operatives team up with Autobots including Hot Spot and Skydive in order to thwart Megatron, but he escapes with the Ark and Dr. Biggles-Jones.

Issues #1–5

Optimus Prime and Gomlock uncover a hitherto unknown faction of Cybertronians who are creating an interlocking planetary network of metal worlds. As Prime faces off against the Cybertronians' commander, Jhiaxus, Autobot Fortress Maximus challenges Megatron aboard the Ark. Skydive manages to save Dr. Biggles-Jones, but Fortress Maximus perishes as the Ark explodes. Bludgeon and the Decepticons return aboard a vast Warworld, and Prime communes with the Matrix mainframe, uncovering the secret of Jhiaxus' second generation.

JHIAXUS

In Generation 2, Optimus Prime and Megatron unite against a [illegible] threat. Optimus [illegible] Jhiaxus, A Decepticon [illegible] Jhiaxus [illegible] but [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible] Jhiaxus [illegible] [illegible] slaying [illegible] before being [illegible]

TWILIGHT'S LAST GLEAMING

The [illegible] of Generation 2 [illegible] suspiciously quickly. Players [illegible] heard Jhiaxus [illegible] *Twilight's Last Gleaming*, but its [illegible] was originally intended [illegible] to end the first [illegible] storyline with [illegible] story [illegible] Weeks [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] of the saga, the finales [illegible] with a teaser [illegible] page.

G2 MEGATRON

Megatron's new, overtly [illegible] G2 [illegible] alternate [illegible] was now a [illegible] as opposed to a [illegible] fitted in with the G1 Joe storyline in which he made his debut. In return for Cybertronian technology from the Ark, Megatron is refitted to his own specifications by the weapons division of the terrorist group, Cobra. Naturally, Megatron reneges on the deal after the refit, he steals the Ark and renders obsolete any technology given to Cobra Commander.

Issues #6–9

Megatron wrests command of the Decepticons from Bludgeon and takes the Creation Matrix from Optimus Prime, only to be defeated by Jhiaxus. Prime and Megatron then join forces, while Starscream initiates his own power play, siding with Jhiaxus. All combatants are unaware of the new threat posed by the Swarm, which is consuming all mechanical life in its path, until Prime uncovers its dark secrets. Before he can act, Starscream leads Jhiaxus and his forces directly to Autobase (the Autobot HQ).

Issues #10–12

The Cybertronians blitz Autobase while Starscream seeks the stolen Creation Matrix on the Decepticon Warworld. The Swarm consumes many Cybertronians and heads for Earth, leaving more [illegible] As the Warworld attacks [illegible] Cybertronians. Prime and Megatron realize that Starscream is not just in control, he *is* the Warworld. When the Swarm arrives, Prime forces Starscream to surrender the Matrix and allows himself to be consumed. The Swarm's void is filled, and Prime is recreated as a parting gesture.

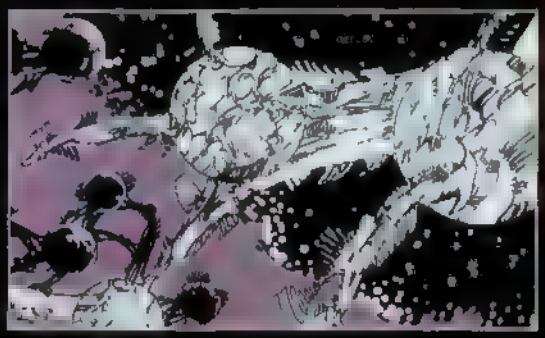
BEYOND GENERATION 2

GONE, BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

AFTER JUST THREE series of toys and 12 monthly comic issues, TRANSFORMERS: Generation 2 was no more. Its demise seemed to be the final death knell for TRANSFORMERS as a whole, the new characters failing to reignite the passion and excitement of the original concept and toys. But a dedicated core of loyal fans kept the TRANSFORMERS torch burning. Through fan conventions (notably Botcon, which opened its doors in 1994), fan fiction, fanzines and, ultimately, the Internet, the saga and overall interest were kept alive. Plans for a new TRANSFORMERS toyline and TV series were already in the works, but in the dark, desolate interim days, the dangling storylines from Generation 2, centering on a character (introduced literally at the death) called the Liege Maximo, provided fuel for fandom's collective imagination.

The Liege Maximo

The vast and imposing mass of Liege Maximo was glimpsed on just one occasion—the final page of the final issue of *Transformers: Generation 2*. It was enough to excite and frustrate TRANSFORMERS fans in equal measure. His words seemed to indicate he was one of the very earliest TRANSFORMERS, predating both Optimus Prime and Megatron (the latter of whom, it appeared, had some kind of "bloodline" connection to the Liege Maximo).



THE HUB

The Liege Maximo nestled in a womblike command cradle within a sprawling network known as the Hub—an impossibly vast interplanetary network of identical (but different-sized) metal worlds, each fashioned to resemble Cybertron itself. How had this come to be? What was its purpose? And who, if anyone, could stop its relentless advance across the Universe? All good questions, but although fans soon began to provide their own answers in various fan fictions, no real answers were forthcoming from writer Simon Furman. At least, not yet....

ALIGNMENT

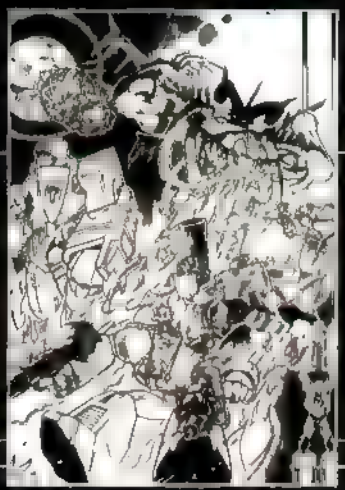
Finally, across two UK fan conventions in 2001 and 2002, Furman provided his own conclusion to the saga. "Alignment" Part 1 was a prose story with illustrations by the likes of Lee Sullivan, Geoff Senior, and Andrew Wildman. It appeared in the convention program for 2001's Transforce convention and was followed the year after by a novella-sized paperback featuring "Alignment" Part 2 and a reprise of Part 1. In the story, the Liege Maximo bids to ascend via his vast resonating planetary structure to the realm of the Dark Gods (Unicron et al.).

GENERATION 2 IN THE UK

Though short-lived, *TRANSFORMERS: Generation 2* did surface in the UK courtesy of Fleetway (which, at the time, published the long-running sci-fi comic *2000 AD*). Only five issues were published, and only the first two contained original comic-strip material (a potted rehash of issue #1 of the US series, re-presented for the UK market). For the rest of its short life, it was a straightforward reprint title.

Fan Fiction

The worlds of G1 and G2 continued in numerous fan fiction adventures, some of which spun out of the then-discontinued Liege Maximo storyline. Writers such as Andy Dornan and Martin McVay, and artists like Nick Roche (whose feminine cover art, featuring the Liege Maximo, is reproduced here) created intricate and epic new storylines from G2's truncated conclusion. Many of the new wave of artists currently working for US publisher Dreamwave emerged from the fan fiction community, which had moved from print publishing to the Internet. In its own way, "Alignment" is fan fiction. Though it answers some questions (for instance, the Liege Maximo is indeed one of the original 13 TRANSFORMERS), the official conclusion to G2 remains untold.



GENERATION 2 TOYS

EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW AGAIN

IN THE UNITED STATES, Generation 2 toys first hit stores in 1993. The main push was spearheaded by the release of Optimus Prime and a completely redesigned Megatron. Other classic toys, retaining their original metal and rubber parts, were joined by new characters with innovations such as sound-chips, water cannons, and color-changing plastic. In Europe and Japan, however, the very first Generation 2 toys had appeared throughout 1991 and 1992—although these toys are often lumped in with the latter Generation 1 releases. Some of these UK/European toy exclusives never appeared in the United States, although many were recolored and released in later US waves.

Robot mode

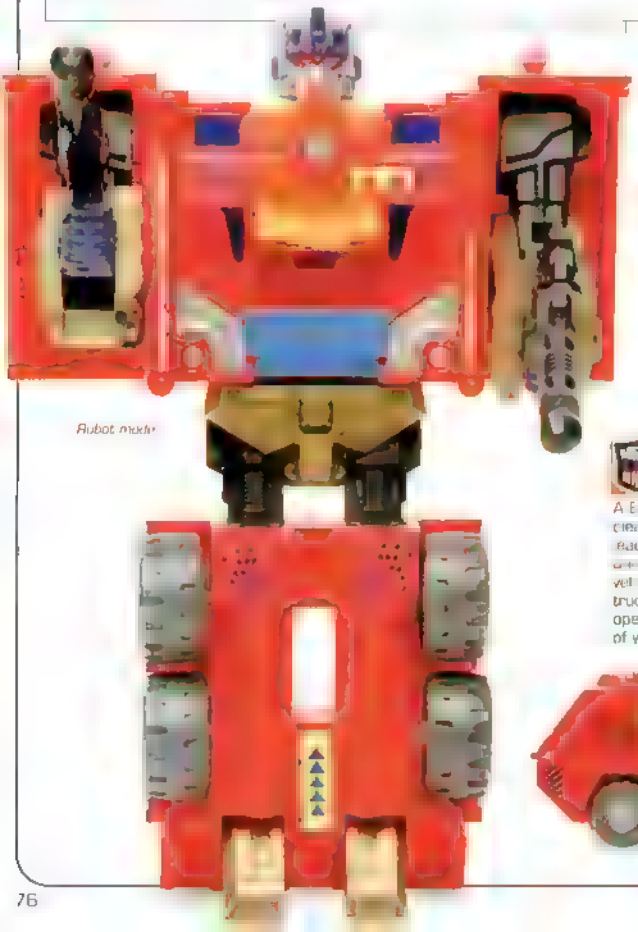
Two handheld weapons

Megatron

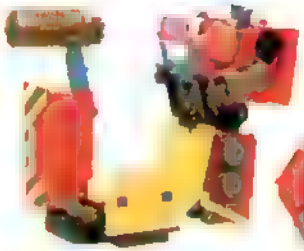
The Megatron metal was one of G2's crowning achievements. Modeled on a General Dynamics M1A1 Abrams MBT, Megatron's tank mode came complete with sound-chip engine noise, missile loading SFX, and a brand-blast. Pushing down on the head produced a "Megatron—attack!" sound bite.

Tank mode

Lever produces cannon loading sound when pulled back

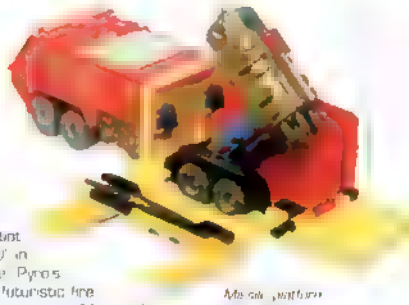


Robot mode



Missile platform mode with Pyro figure

Missile launcher



Missile platform mode

Pyro

A European G2 exclusive, Pyro was clearly designed as the counterpart to Autobot leader Ultra Magnus. Across the board, Pyro's specs mirror Ultra Magnus's (strength 10, intelligence 10, rank 10, etc.). As with Ultra Magnus, Pyro's vehicle configuration and trailer form a futuristic fire truck (on eight chunky wheels). The rear section of his trailer opens up to form a missile platform with two configurations, only one of which can be manned by robot mode Pyro.

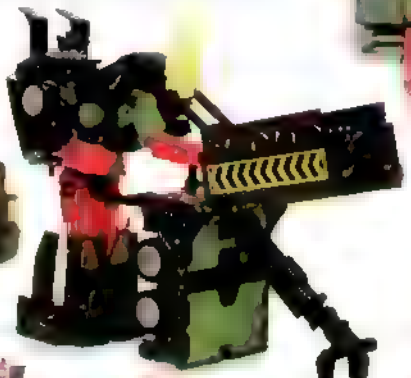
Fire Truck mode

Twin handheld weapons

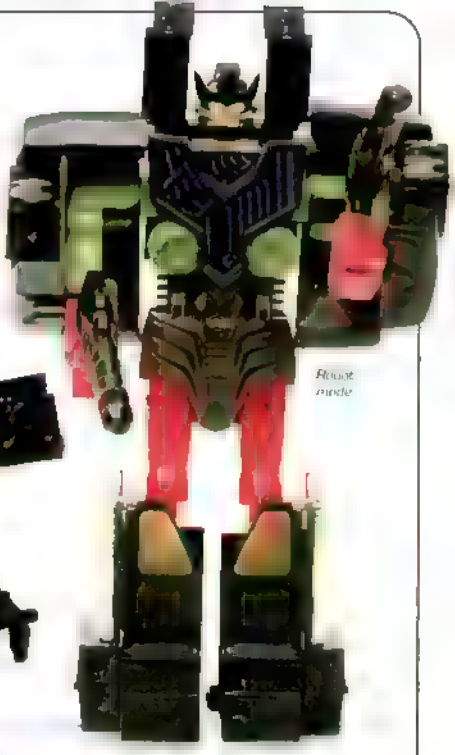
Clench

Pre-G2 Megatron, Clench was clearly intended as a European-exclusive Decepticon leader - a row of unbroken 10s make up his tech specs. Classed as an Obliterator, he (strangely) led a subgroup of one. Much like Pyro in general robot-mode style, Clench's vehicle mode was quite similar to G1 Motormaster, being a kind of truck (in Clench's case, one that splits in two on transformation). The rear section of Clench's truck mode transforms into a missile launcher/platform.

Truck mode



Missile launcher and support arm



Robot mode

Flash

Flash is a member of the Autobot Turbomasters cars line (others being Boss, Scorch and Hurricane). The Turbomaster line also included larger toys—Thunderclash (an Optimus Prime-style vehicle) and Rotorforce (a helicopter). Flash is a Hot Rod-style sports car.

Robot mode

Vehicle mode

Boss

The leader of the Turbomasters is Boss, a blue robot and turbocar with front-mounted missile launcher. Turbomasters were largely ruled out from US release because of these highly efficient missile launchers, which ran afoul of the restrictions on toys with firing weapons.

Vehicle mode

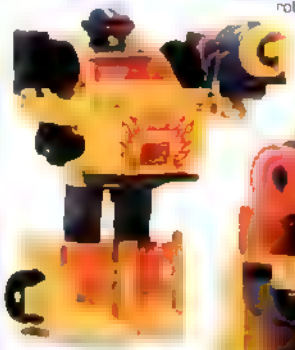
Missile

Missile launcher

Missile launcher

Scorch

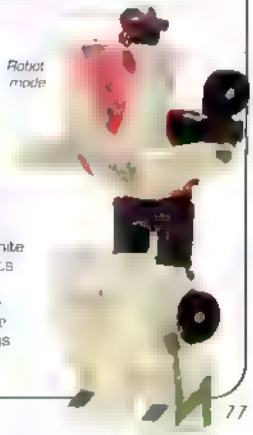
In vehicle mode, Scorch is a pickup truck powered by a central turbo, which becomes a missile launcher in robot mode. Released only in Europe in a period that wasn't yet G2 but wasn't officially G1 either, Turbomasters rest uneasily between generations. But given their relationship with other lines such as Predators, many collectors now regard them as G2 toys.



Robot mode

Vehicle mode

Vehicle mode



Robot mode

Hurricane

Also known as Blizzard, Hurricane is a white sports car in vehicle mode. His tech specs cast him as the Defensive Tactical Specialist for the team. Available in some parts of Europe under the alternate name Cannonmasters, the Turbomaster line was also briefly available in Canada.

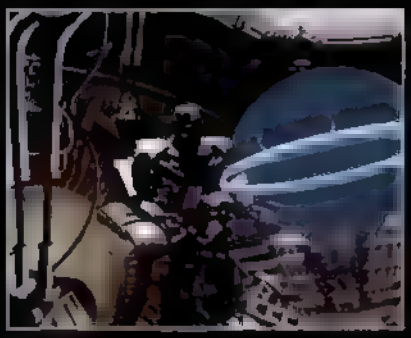
BEAST WARS

LAUNCHED IN 1996, Beast Wars introduced fans to the next era of TRANSFORMERS, set some 300 years after the end of the Great War on Cybertron and Earth. New factions—the heroic Maximals and evil Predacons, in semiorganic "beast modes"—battle in the distant past on an unidentified planet, rich in energon. The new toy line cut all ties with former TRANSFORMERS "generations" (at least initially), and was supported by a visually striking computer-animated series... the Beast Wars had begun

THE ARRIVAL

TRANSFORMERS—MAXIMIZE!

INITIAL REACTION TO the new Beast Wars line was a mixture of excitement and confusion. Was this a continuation of the classic generations or something completely new? The first episode referred to Cybertron and—tantalizingly—the "Great War." But was Megatron the same character fans had come to know and loathe? Was Optimus Primal linked to Optimus Prime? Were Maximals and Predacons descendants of the Autobots and the Decepticons? When they began work on Beast Wars, script editors Bob Forward and Larry DiTillio chose to sidestep the tangled web of continuity that was G1 and G2... but not for long.



AGENDA

Megatron scans the Beast Wars planet for energon, the key—he believes—to victory over the Maximals. With planetary stockpiles low and both factions now downsized for better efficiency, Megatron knows that if he can gather new energon reserves, the Predacons can restart the Great War... and this time win it!

Pursued by the Maximal spacecraft, the Axalon, Megatron's stolen Predacon ship turns to fight.

BEGINNINGS

The opening sequence of "Beast Wars" part 1 uncannily mirrored the first-ever G1 animated episode, "More Than Meets the Eye" Part 1—even though Bob Forward, who wrote the Beast Wars episode, hadn't seen it.

A transwarp portal (similar to a Space Bridge, only involving time as well as distance) opens up and two spaceships emerge, one in pursuit of the other. After a firefight, both ships crash-land on an Earth-like planet.

STASIS PODS

During the orbital dogfight, the *Axalon* ejects its cargo of Stasis Pods as a precautionary measure. The shielded, metal Stasis Pods contain Maximal protoforms (masses of grey, shapeless gel filled with replicating nanomachinery) and their Sparks (the sentient aspect of the Maximal itself). On arrival in a new environment, the Pod's computer scans for compatible life-forms, reformatting the occupant accordingly. However, the Maximal chip can be overridden, making the protoform believe it is a Predacon.

Golden Disks
The first Golden Disk, stolen by Megatron from Cybertron and used to guide his ship, was originally sent into space on board Earth's *Voyager* craft. The second Disk belongs to an alien race (later identified as the Vok), and holds the key to great power.

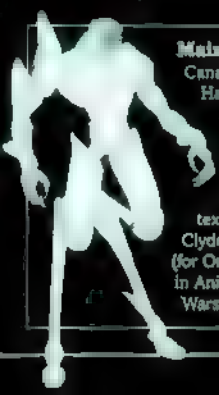
EARTH (BY ANY OTHER NAME)
It is eventually revealed that the Maximals and Predacons have crash-landed on *prehistoric* Earth (sometime *after* G1's Ark crash-landed there). Initial confusion results from the planet's twin moons, one of which is eventually revealed to be an artificial construct fashioned by an alien race. The proximity of the G1 characters (deactivated aboard the Ark), and the time paradoxes inherent in this clash of generations, launched a large number of subsequent storylines.

Detecting buried dinosaur bones on Earth, Megatron adopts the form of a T-Rex as his beast mode.

OVERLOAD
Guided by a "Golden Disk," Megatron travels back in time in search of raw energon (the substance that empowers TRANSFORMERS). However, overexposure to energon causes both the Maximals and the Predacons to overload. To prevent system-wide shutdown (or "stasis lock"), both factions create secondary organic "beast" modes.

First Strikes

As the hastily ejected Stasis Pods begin to fall to Earth, the Maximals scramble to gather their brethren. Megatron, meanwhile, instructs his Predacons to find the Pods first, and to override their occupants' built-in personality chips with a "shell" program in order to create new Predacon warriors. As the first series develops, unmistakable traces of alien technology and artifacts begin to surface, and the vast energon deposits are discovered to be artificial. The planet has clearly at one time been used by the aliens as part of some mysterious experiment, and everything points to the fact that they were coming back....



Mainframe: Computer Animation Pioneers
Canada-based animation house Mainframe Entertainment turned Hasbro's new TRANSFORMERS toys into a 3-D-animated TV series. Mainframe was a pioneer of CG (computer generated) animation, breaking previous boundaries and limitations. The studio used digital "wireframes" (such as Cheetor, *left*) to model the Beast Wars characters in 3-D before adding surface colors and textures. In 1997, production designer Clyde Klotz was honored with an Emmy (for Outstanding Individual Achievement in Animation) for his work on the Beast Wars animated series.

OPTIMUS PRIMAL

CRISIS OF COMMAND

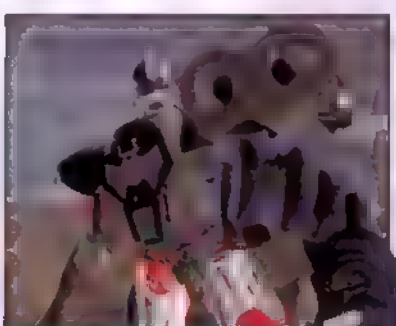
THOUGH HE BORE the name Optimus, Primal was not a Prime elect, since the Matrix did not choose him. On Cybertron, Primal's fascination with the former Autobot leader, Optimus Prime, led him to take a variation of his name as a tribute. Primal greatly admired Prime's compassion for friend and foe alike, as revealed in studies of the Great War. But when the Maximal High Command ordered Primal to capture a rogue Predacon named Megatron, the momentous trials that followed would forge a true leader

Cyber enhanced, super-dense carapace is resistant to most (non-fission) firepower

Communications uplink array and sensory hub

The Makings of a Great Warrior

Optimus Primal preferred to resolve disputes by peaceful means, defying a deeply buried instinct to lash out. Cast back thousands of years through a transwarp portal, Primal found life or death decisions thrust upon him. Some among his crew felt Primal wasn't ready, but time and circumstance changed the opinion of even his harshest critics



FIREPOWER

In robot mode, Optimus Primal possesses shoulder-mounted mega-blast missile cannons and twin wrist-mounted blasters each of which fires micro-concussion shells. He carries twin tri-polymer swords and a high-impact seismic mace

BEAST MODE

Cybernetically fused musculature enhances Primal's natural strength in gorilla mode. Though utterly unlike his original Cybertronian "monster truck" mode, Primal finds he's actually more at home in his new, techno-organic form. It's as if the (surface) civilized and (buried) wild aspects of his nature are finally reconciled. He finds he has far more capacity in beast mode for instinctive thought, translated instantly into controlled, forthright action

Built-in rockets allow short periods of flight

INTELLIGENCE 10	ENDURANCE 1
SPEED 10	SKILL 10
COURAGE 10	RANK 10
	FIREPOWER 10

MEGATRON

MASTER OF HIS DESTINY

THE FEAR FACTOR

...spiring fear. Megatron knew, would make him master of all he surveyed. S... it was not ... Predacon Commander ... of the last to surrender in the Great War ... struck ... owed into an ... of peace ... with a ... ence to conjure fear ... his enemies.

As well as housing his plasma ray emitter, Megatron's powerful pincer-claw can slice an enemy in half.

TIRED OF PEACE on Cybertron, Megatron decided to defy his superiors and take matters into his own hands. Energon was the key: a rich source would allow him to prepare for war. To this end, Megatron and a group of like-minded Predacons stole a Golden Disk, which revealed the location of a planet brimming with natural energon fields. But Megatron's plans did not stop there. The planet on which he had set his sights was Earth, and its prehistory held the key to ultimate power.

Megatron's battle-armor shield has razor-sharp edges for close combat.

PREDACONS

The Predacons rose out of the ashes of the defeated Decepticons, but—left with little or no energon and relatively few in number—they had no choice but to accept Maximal terms for surrender. In the years following the end of the Great War, the Predacons rebuilt their power base, their ruling Tri-Predacus Council secretly preparing for a new war to reclaim Cybertron. But the Tri-Predacus Council was willing to bide its time, and would not tolerate a rogue force such as Megatron.

FIREPOWER

In robot mode, Megatron utilizes hip-mounted concussion blasters, a plasma-ray emitter, missile launchers with dual payload warheads, and a battle-armor shield (for defense *and* offense).

BEAST MODE

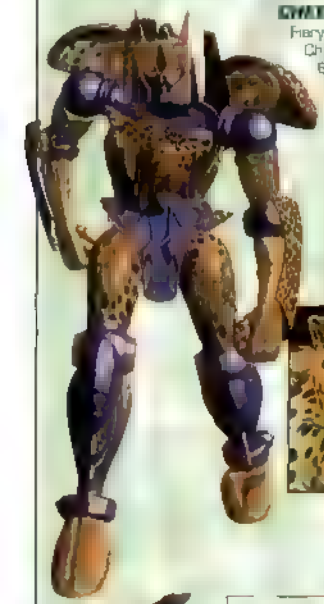
Megatron strikes with all the thunderous power and rage of his prehistoric proto-model, the T-Rex. His former mobile battle-base mode had more tricks, but Megatron enjoys the terrifying purity and simplicity of his new form. He relishes the stunned shock in the optical sensors of an opponent as he changes, the fear-induced torment of paralysis. And if that fails? His jaws spit paralyzing fluids before they snap shut!

INTELLIGENCE 10	ENDURANCE 10
SKILL 10	STRENGTH 10
COURAGE 10, RANK 10	FIREPOWER 10

THE MAXIMALS

A MIGHTY MENAGERIE

AS MAXIMAL PROTOFORMS were rescued from their Stasis Pods, the number of Maximals under Optimus Primal's command grew. The flight crew (Rhinox, Cheetor, and Rattrap) were joined by Airazor, Tigatron, and Silverbolt. Some would bravely fall in battle. Others would fall, only to return again, altered beyond recognition. Certain Predacons would even join the Maximals, their evil natures checked to varying degrees. Trapped on prehistoric Earth, all yearned for an end to the Beast Wars, hoping to return to Cybertron and the peaceful ways they had left behind.



CHEETOR

Fiery, fast, and foolish. That's how Cheetor often appears to others. But strip away the impulsiveness, the reckless need to impress, and you'll find the Spark of a loyal and true warrior. Cheetor's combat skills are sharp enough to get him out of most scrapes, and his Quasar cannon (or "gun," as so called for its organic styling) supplies the necessary firepower in hotter spots.

INTELLIGENCE 5 ENDURANCE 8
SPEED 10 RANK 7
FIREPOWER 7

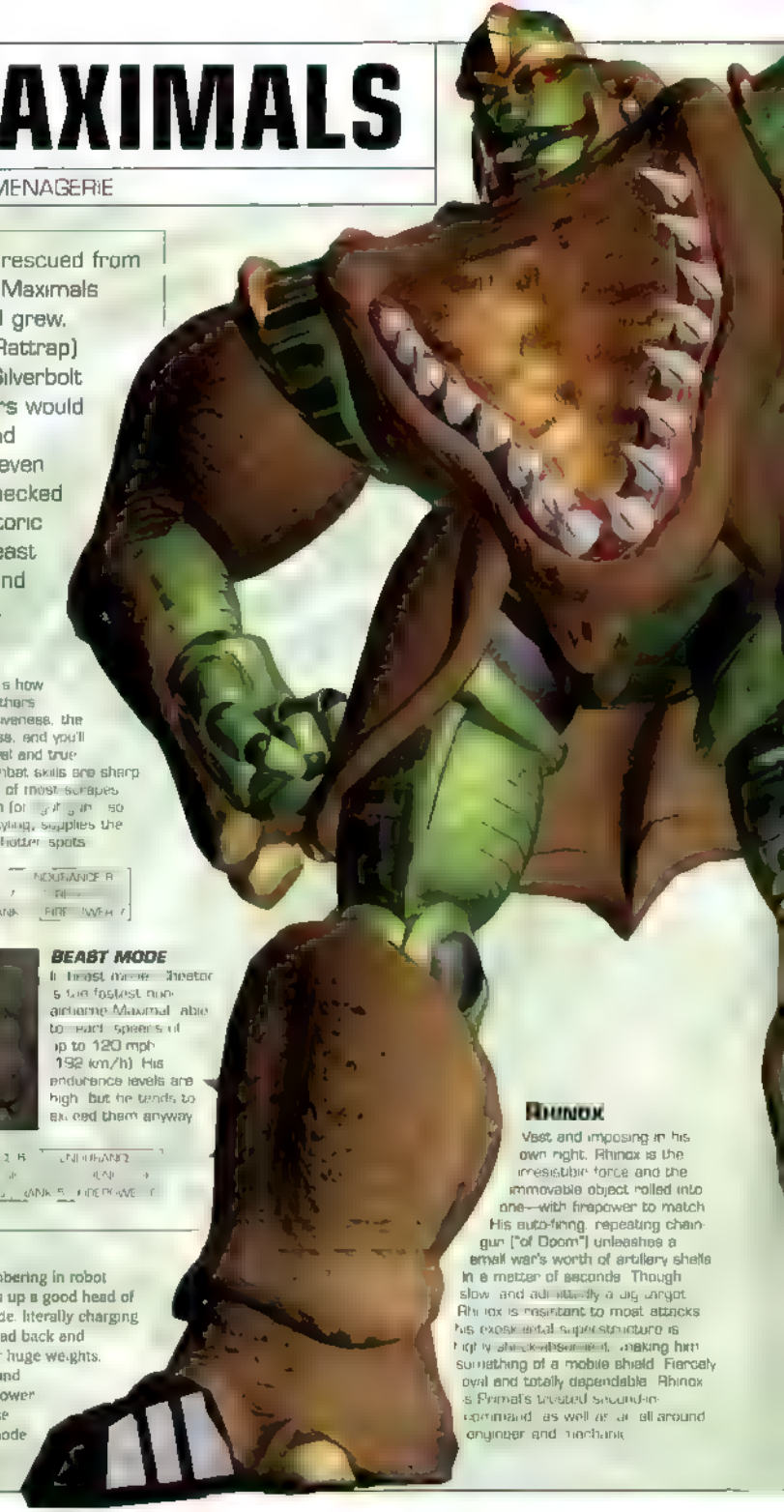
BEAST MODE

In beast mode, Cheetor is the fastest non-airborne Maximal able to reach speeds of up to 120 mph (192 km/h). His endurance levels are high, but he tends to exceed them anyway.

INTELLIGENCE 5 ENDURANCE 8
SPEED 10 RANK 5 FIREPOWER 7

Rhinox, Beast Mode

Slow and somewhat lumbering in robot mode, Rhinox works up a good head of steam in beast mode, literally charging into battle. His broad back and shoulders can bear huge weights, and he acts as ground transportation for slower Maximals and those without a flight mode.



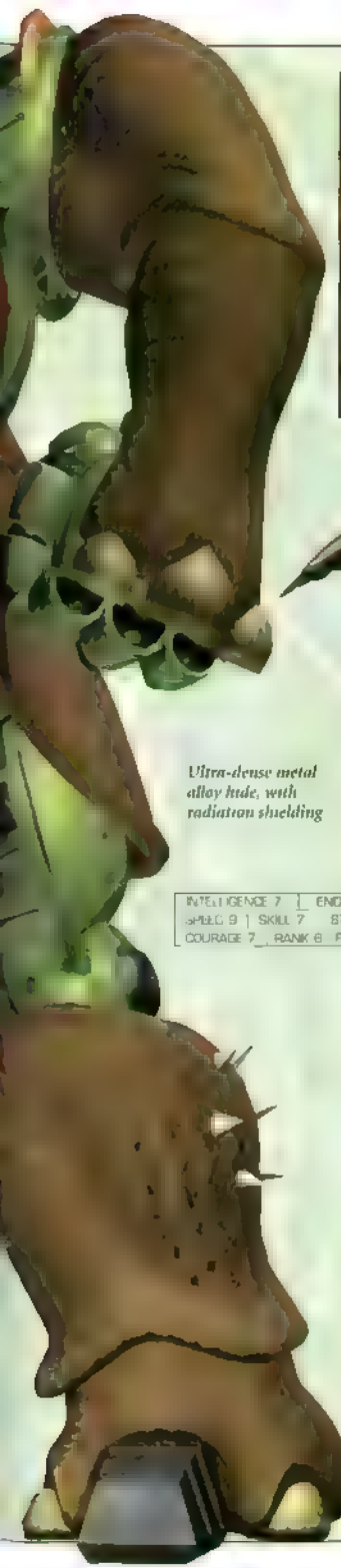
Rhinox

Vast and imposing in his own right, Rhinox is the irresistible force and the immovable object rolled into one—with firepower to match. His auto-firing, repeating chain-gun ("of Doom") unleashes a small war's worth of artillery shells in a matter of seconds. Though slow and admittedly a big target, Rhinox is resistant to most attacks; his exoskeletal superstructure is highly shock-absorbent, making him something of a mobile shield. Fiercely loyal and totally dependable, Rhinox is Primal's trusted second-in-command, as well as an all-around engineer and mechanic.

RATTRAP

Arrogant and mouthy, Rattrap talks a good fight, but prefers to leave the actual combat to others. His particular talents (leaving the more unsavory ones aside) involve covert infiltration and reconnaissance, and Rattrap can provide a comprehensive tactical assessment of most scenarios faster than the flick of a tail. Forever berating Optimus Primal or needling Dinobot, he lives a decidedly charmed life.

INTELLIGENCE 7		ENDURANCE 5	
SPEED 8	SKILL 7	STRENGTH 6	
COURAGE 8	RANK 5	FIREPOWER 6	



Ultra-dense metal alloy hide, with radiation shielding

AIRAZOR

Reformatted on Earth as a peregrine falcon, Airazor actually feels more kinship with her adopted planet than Cybertron. Soaring on air currents at 30,000 feet (9,000 meters), Airazor can scan detail on the planet surface, relaying it to base instantly as a virtual-reality graphic. She also feels a strong bond with Cheetor, since part of Cheetor's circuitry completed her protoform/Spark reintegration.

INTELLIGENCE 7		ENDURANCE 5	
SPEED 9	SKILL 7	STRENGTH 5	
COURAGE 7	RANK 6	FIREPOWER 4	

Razor-sharp, platinum-coated claws

INTELLIGENCE 7		ENDURANCE 5	
SPEED 9	SKILL 8	STRENGTH 8	
COURAGE 9	RANK 6	FIREPOWER 8	

DINOBOT

A warrior to his Spark Core, Dinobot is a former Predacon who values honor and duty above all else. When he challenged Optimus Primal for the leadership of the Maximals, and Primal subsequently saved his life, an enduring debt of loyalty was forged. Dinobot's code of honor is so deeply ingrained it even permeates his DNA—as Megatron later discovered to his cost (in "Nemesis" Part 2, *see page 93*). His speed and savagery are backed up by cybernetic eye beams and a rotary sword.

PREDACONS

WILD WILDLIFE

PREDACONS HAVE THE same capacity for tyranny and treachery as Decepticons: always looking for trouble and ready to stab Megatron in the back. The core Predacons comprise chaos-causing Scorponok and Terrorsaur, traitorous Tarantulas and Blackarachnia, and loyal but luckless Waspinator. Megatron's ranks were subsequently bolstered by other subverted Maximal protoforms—such as the fire ant Inferno and the Fuzor Quickstrike—and rogue Predacon criminal Rampage (formerly Protoform X).

Blackarachnia in spider mode, with energo-web nodes

Terrorsaur is as primitive and instinctual as the creature on which his beast mode is modeled.

Multiple arm-mounted machine guns and energo-web spinners

BLACKARACHNIA

This is one dangerous lady, as far as the definition applies. It's not just the poisonous cyber-venom that immobilizes Blackarachnia's captives, nor the life-force-draining fangs, but rather her sheer capacity for sudden rage and the devastating firepower from her multiple arm-mounted machine guns and energo-web spinners.

Ultra-fine web-mesh organic polymers for soundless gliding

TERRORSAUR

Swooping down from the sky, Terrorsaur rains fire on those below and randomly pounds terrain even when his target is long since departed (as in dead!). In his destructive zeal, Terrorsaur sometimes forgets to close his mouth in flight and swallows whole flocks of birds.

INTELLIGENCE 5	ENDURANCE 4	
SPEED 8	SKILL 8	STRENGTH 6
COURAGE 7	RANK 8	FIREPOWER 5

INTELLIGENCE 7	ENDURANCE 6	
SPEED 6	SKILL 6	STRENGTH 4
COURAGE 8	RANK 5	FIREPOWER 7

INTELLIGENCE 5	ENDURANCE 5
SPEED 8	SKILL 8
COURAGE 7	RANK

WASPINATOR

It's not that Waspinator lacks fighting skills or firepower; his wing missiles and cyber stinger are more than a match for many Maximal weapons. But he has a habit of being in the wrong place at the wrong time—usually the line of fire—and he tends to get parts blown off him. His fellow Predacons *do* tend to push him to the forefront of any offensive. It always ends badly for poor old Waspinator.

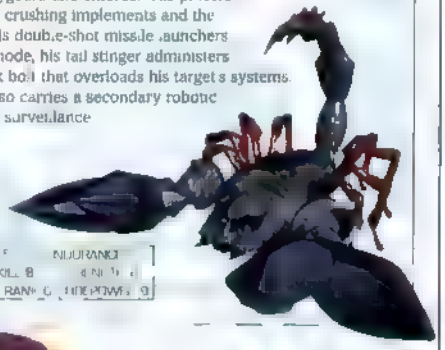
Beast mode, with tail stinger

Robot mode (with all parts present and correct)

Tensile cyber-musculature with built-in gun barrel and rapid-fire mechanism

Scorponok

A thug with a brain is a dangerous combination. But that's just what Scorponok is. He's also loyal to Megatron, often acting as a kind of personal bodyguard and enforcer. His pincers serve as both crushing implements and the housing for his double-shot missile launchers. In scorpion mode, his tail stinger administers a cyber-shock bolt that overloads his target's systems. Scorponok also carries a secondary robotic bee drone for surveillance.



INTELLIGENCE 5	ENDURANCE 6
SPEED 5	SKILL 8
COURAGE 7	RANK 6

TARANTULAS

With enough agendas, schemes, and designs to make even Megatron look like a rank amateur in the "evil genius" stakes, Tarantulas' only loyalty is to himself. He is actually working for the Predacon secret police as a double agent. With Dark Science links that go all the way back to Unicron the chaos-bringer itself, Tarantulas operates on an entirely different playing field from the rest of the Predacons and Maximals.

Spider-sac with venom storage pods and neural web-spinners

INTELLIGENCE 4	ENDURANCE 6
SPEED 7	SKILL 8
COURAGE 7	RANK 5

BEAST WARS

TV SEASON 1

SELECTED EPISODES FROM THE DEFINING FIRST SERIES

THE FIRST, 26-episode season of *Beast Wars* began with a tight focus and gradually broadened its scope to become a sophisticated and multi-layered sci-fi epic. At first, references to previous continuity were throwaways the series built its own mythology, focusing on the planet itself (only revealed to be Earth in Season 2) and the proliferation of signs, structures, and artifacts that indicate a previous alien visitation. Then, as script editors and writers Bob Forward and Larry DiTillio became more versed in TRANSFORMERS lore, the series also started to explore its G1 roots, building toward epic, sweeping revelations.

"BEAST WARS" PART 1

Emerging through a transwarp portal into the past, dueling Maximal and Predacon ships are forced to crash-land on Earth. Large concentrations of energon force both factions to create organic beast vehicles. Predacon Dinobot attempts to wrest command from Megatron, only to be bested by Scorponok. Dinobot then challenges Optimus Primal to a duel, insisting that the victor will lead the Maximals.

"BEAST WARS" PART 2

Primal and Dinobot battle just as the Predacons attack. Dinobot falls into a chasm. Primal only just saving him from certain death. Predacon missiles expose a vast energon deposit in a mountain, and both factions race to claim it. Megatron targets Primal, but Dinobot deflects the missile, repaying his debt. The missile ignites the mountain, initiating a destructive chain reaction. Dinobot joins the Maximals, and Primal grimly announces, "the Beast Wars have begun."

Inferno

"THE WEB"

Rhinox constructs a communication device and Cheetor volunteers to test it. Rashly dashing away from the Maximal base, he runs into Scorponok and engages him in battle. Primal is angry, and an abashed Cheetor vows to redeem himself. To this end, he seeks intelligence on a new Predacon mega-cannon—but this time has to be rescued from the clutches of Tarantulas.

"CHAIN OF COMMAND"

The Maximals investigate an alien-style stone circle and are attacked by Terrorsaur, whose missiles reawaken a buried energon crystal. In response, an alien pod appears and apparently destroys Primal—although he has in fact been assimilated by it. The now-leaderless Maximals are attacked by a pack Megatron. Rhinox devises a way to release Primal, and he puts the Predacons to flight. The alien probe vanishes.

"POWER SURGE"

Terrorsaur discovers a buried energon-filled mountain. His powers hyper-boosted, he attacks Megatron and declares himself leader. Ever loyal, Scorponok sets out to restore Megatron to power, while Terrorsaur plans an attack on the Maximals. Returning to the mountain for a new infusion of power, Terrorsaur encounters the Maximals, who are trying to destroy it. Primal draws Terrorsaur away while Rattrap deactivates charges. Megatron takes revenge on Terrorsaur.

"THE PROBE"

The Maximal High Command on Cybertron sends probes through transwarp portals in an effort to locate Primal's ship. Rhinox detects one, but the high energon levels make any kind of normal communication with it impossible. In an attempt to send a transwarp signal to the probe, the Maximals build a signal array deep in Predacon territory (the only suitable site), but Megatron—not wishing to be found—destroys it. The Cybertronian probe heads away from the planet.

"VICTORY"

Spying on the Predacons' ship/base, the Maximals watch as the Predacons turn on Megatron. A stray shot ignites energon crystals and the base is destroyed, taking—it seems—the Predacons along with it. The Maximals prepare to board the *Axalon* and return to Cybertron, but Dinobot stays behind, fearing imprisonment on his return. Heading off alone, Dinobot discovers the Predacons had faked their demise to lull the Maximals into a false sense of security. The *Axalon* is grounded once more.

"THE SPARK"

"THE TRIGGER" PART 1

"THE TRIGGER" PART 2

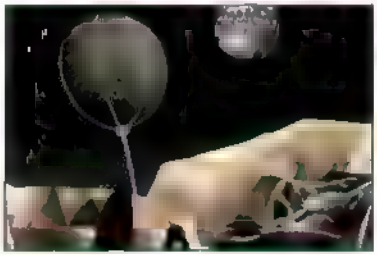
"SPIDER'S GAME"

"CALL OF THE WILD"

"POSSESSION"

"BEFORE THE STORM"

"OTHER VOICES" PART 1



"OTHER VOICES" PART 2

FUZORS AND TRANSMETALS

AS SEASON 1 of the *Beast Wars* TV series draws to a close, a vast transwarp energy wavefront is heading toward Earth... the result of the destruction of an artificial, alien-created moon. Although the immediate danger to the Maximals and Predacons on Earth passes, the wavefront brings with it dramatic changes. Many Maximals and Predacons are exposed to the strange transwarp energies, which causes their robot and beast forms to mutate into techno-organic Transmetal forms. Even the downed Stasis Pods are affected, giving rise to hybrid beast-form TRANSFORMERS known as Fuzors.

Transmetal Tarantulas
After the transwarp energy surge, Megatron's chief science officer (and double agent) Tarantulas emerges as a techno-organic arachnid. In spider mode, he can now lower two wheels from his abdomen and race into battle at high speed. His Transmetal incarnation appeared on TV before the toy was released, making his vehicle mode one of the first to be seen. In robot mode, Tarantulas now has hands instead of pincers.

Coming Of The Fuzors
The Fuzors had mixed and matched beast modes, literally a fusion of extant animals to create a quasi-legendary new beast. Heroic, noble Silverbolt (*below*), for instance, had eagle's wings and the body of a wolf. Some Fuzor toys did not appear in the TV series, including Air Hammer (shark and eagle), Bantor (baboon and tiger), and Injector (lionfish and bee).

QUICKSTRIKE
When two damaged Stasis Pods landed side by side, Silverbolt emerged from one and eventually joined the Maximals. The occupant of the other Pod was Quickstrike, whose violent, destructive nature led him directly into the clutches of Megatron and the Predacons.

TRANSMETALS II

The Transmetal powers would be used again during the final season of the Beast Wars TV series. Though still all-robotic, the secondary vehicular/flight modes disappeared and the characters (and toys) were simply further augmented in both robot and beast mode. While Optimus Primal morphed into his "Optimal" Optimus form (still retaining his largely simian characteristics), Megatron changed alternate mode entirely.

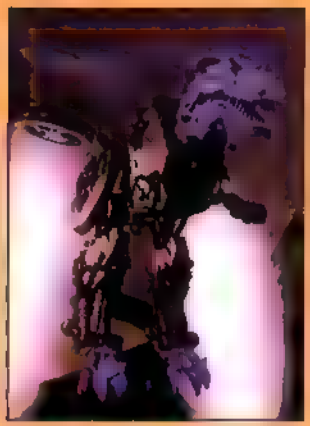
Transmetal Tarantulas' massive firepower is concentrated in two shoulder mounted rocket launchers.

Fuzor Quickstrike combines scorpion and snake in one terrifying whole

DINOBOT

Dinobot returns in a new Transmetal II configuration. Megatron, it transpires, used a sample of the original Dinobot's DNA to create a cloned Transmetal version. He subdivided Rampage's super-Spark, using one portion to bring life and sentience to his new, savage creation.

Transmetal Cheetor with Dinobot in his original form



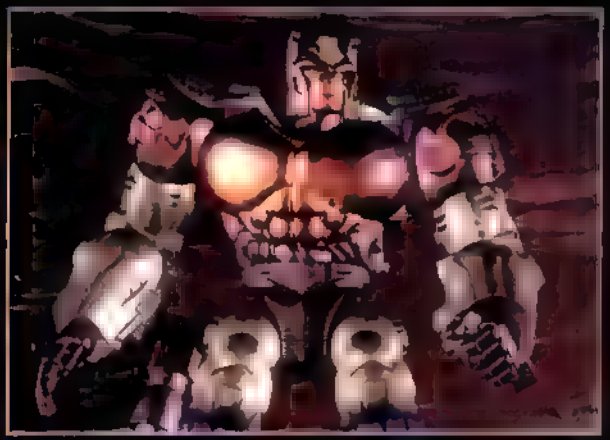
MEGATRON

The transwarp wave that hits the Earth in the Season 2 episode "Aftermath" (*see page 92*) dramatically mutates Megatron's robot and beast modes. One of the first few Predacons to get a Transmetal form, Megatron emerges more powerful and deadly than ever with three forms, flight capability, and new, enhanced weaponry. He would change again in the course of the TV series, becoming a Transmetal II fire-breathing dragon.

Transmetal Megatron has wheels in the soles of his feet.

Transmetal Modifications

In addition to their new techno-organic bodies and enhanced abilities, Transmetals also possess additional mechanical accessories that they can access in beast mode. In the Season 2 episode "The Coming of the Fuzors," Transmetal Megatron uses inline skates in T-Rex mode, and Primal launches himself into the air on a turbo-powered hoverboard (*left*).



Apparently destroyed in the transwarp explosion that wipes out the alien "moon," Primal returns from the Matrix (courtesy of Rhinox) and is granted a new, enhanced body, with twin maces, built-in weaponry, and hoverboard. He swiftly puts all to good use, trouncing the Predacons almost singlehandedly.

Inferno was among the characters not granted a Transmetal mode.

Waspinator appeared only in his non-Transmetal form in the TV show

BEAST WARS

TV SEASONS 2 & 3

SELECTED EPISODES FROM THE G1 FRIENDLY SEASONS 2 AND 3

INSPIRED BY THE positive fan reaction to Series 1 script editors Bob Forward and Larry DiTillio brought Seasons 2 and 3 firmly back into the core Generation 1 mythology. Their script consultant for all things G1 was Benson Yee, a committed fan and general font of TRANSFORMERS knowledge. The fact that the series was set on prehistoric Earth was happenstance, but Forward and DiTillio made full use of the Ark's chronological and geographical location to fuse the two generations into a proper whole. Even Generation 2 gets a nod. DiTillio used the Swarm (or at least an evolution thereof) as his "alien" force inspiration.

"AFTERMATH"

The pivotal single four-part transwarp explosion (in "Other Voices Part 2", see page 89) replaces many of the Maximals and Predacons' existing new "Transmetal" forms. Terrorsaur and Scorponok are destroyed by a sudden wave of new Transmetal forms, Tarantulas (who now has Transmetal wings) and Rattrap (who has been infected by Blackarachnia during her bid to refit the Stasis Pod) reveals his new mental domination over her. Megatron and the surviving Predacons attack the leaderless Maximals but Rattrap and Cheetor force Megatron to withdraw.

Depth Charge

"COMING OF THE FUZORS" PART 1

In a bid to bolster his depleted forces, Megatron invades two flowered islands. The occupants are identical to Quintesson and Inverbolt both of which are currently awaiting the arrival of their alien and winged wolf respectively. All Predacons are victorious. Meanwhile, Dinobot and Waspinator agree to break into Megatron's inner sanctum and steal the two Fuzor Disks. Dinobot allows Waspinator to transport his brain. Megatron's defenses are overcome with ease. Dinobot's attempt to take temporary command of the Maximals prepares for the inevitable Predacon attack. Rhinox goes offline, sending his consciousness into transwarp space in an effort to find any trace of the missing Optimus Primal.

"COMING OF THE FUZORS" PART 2

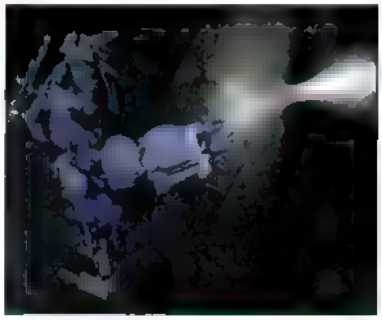
Battle commences, Silverbolt suggesting that they allow the Maximals to surrender. Megatron thought will have none of it, and the vulnerable Maximal base, the *Avalon*, comes under sustained fire. The Beast Wars pilot, apart from Silverbolt, but Rattrap and Cheetor spark a new Predacon in a nod to their departed leader Optimus Primal. They place Silverbolt's body in a restorative chamber. The attack continues until eventually the base's shields buckle and the Maximals are overwhelmed. Before Megatron can execute them all, Optimus Primal returns in a new Transmetal body, having followed Rhinox's trail back to the Beast Wars planet (now identified as Cybertron's Earth). Aided by Silverbolt, who switches allegiance, the Predacon forces are put to flight.

"MAXIMAL NO MORE"

Believing that Megatron is on the verge of gaining ultimate power, Dinobot considers returning to the Predacons. He offers Megatron the Cybertronian Golden Disk as proof of his sincerity. But when Megatron demands he kill the helpless Rattrap, Dinobot rebels again, managing to hold Megatron and the Predacons at bay long enough for Primal and the others to arrive. Though Dinobot offers to go into exile, Primal welcomes him back to the Maximals.

"OTHER VISITS" PART 1

As Dinobot and Rhinox analyze the alien Disk, Tigatron and Airazor uncover yet another alien snare. Super-strong vines (from an alien plant) restrain them, and they are transported offworld. Megatron, meanwhile, forges a wary alliance with Tarantulas against the aliens, while Inferno and Blackarachnia step back into the alien Disk. Predacons and Maximals clash at the site of Tigatron and Airazor's disappearance, but another appearance when the alien plant morphs into a podlike spacecraft. An energy surge from the vessel felts all combatants.



"OTHER VISITS" PART 2

The Predacons recover first, and Megatron sets off after Disk to break into the alien ship. Once inside, Megatron symbiotically bonds with the ship and commands it to rise up, snaring the fallen Predacons and Optimus Primal in a tractor beam. Megatron uses and then discards Tarantulas, who forges a new alliance with the Maximals. Tarantulas reveals that Megatron has discovered a transwarp engines, and is preparing to return to Cybertron. The Maximals attack the ship, allowing Rattrap and Tarantulas to access the interior and foil Megatron's plans.

"CODE OF HERO"

Anguished at having originally surrendered a Cybertronian Golden Disk to Megatron, Dinobot sets out to reclaim it. Megatron, meanwhile, is using the Disk to see if the future can be changed. He discovers that the Maximals cause a deadly avalanche, foretold by early *Beast Wars* sagas, thereby denying the Autobots victory in the future. Appalled by Megatron's plan, Dinobot stands alone against the assembled forces of the Predacons as they attempt to enter the valley and its inhabitants. The Golden Disk is destroyed!

"THE AGENDA" PART 1

As the wavefront from the transwarp explosion nears Cybertron, the Tri-Protectus Council detects its approach and shields it from Maximal sensors on the planet. Fearing further repercussions, they dispatch a covert agent aboard a transwarp cruiser to wipe out rogue Predacon Megatron and the stray Maximals and Predacons on Earth. The agent immediately makes his presence felt on prehistoric Earth, using the ship's firepower to scatter the attacking Predacons. Primal identifies the agent as Ravage, a former Decepticon spy, and agrees to an alliance. The Predacon base is breached and Megatron is placed under arrest.

"THE AGENDA" PART 2

With Ravage's ship lacking enough fuel for all to return to Cybertron, the Maximals (except for Silverbolt, who is searching for the errant Blackarachnia) go in search of Megatron's hidden energon cache. Ravage tells Megatron that Tarantulas was a double agent. The Tri-Protectus Council, fearing the Maximals battle-hardened energon-fueled Inferno, Megatron appeals to Ravage's former Decepticon loyalties, revealing that the Cybertronian Golden Disk contained a secret message from G1 Megatron. Ravage is swayed, believing that the Predacons/Decepticons can still aim ultimate victory. He releases Megatron and turns his ship's guns on the Maximals.

"THE AGENDA" PART 3

Just as the *Axalon*'s tensions start to crumble, Rattrap manages a daring raid on Ravage's ship, bringing it down with two well-placed grenades, killing Ravage. Megatron, Dinobot, and Primal, fearing what he has discovered—pursuits Meanwhile, Silverbolt and Blackarachnia discovered the G1 Autobots' ship, the Ark. Blackarachnia allows Megatron access, convinced that he will make good his threat to kill Silverbolt. The Maximals manage to board the Ark's escape pod, but too late. Megatron, meaning to change history, shoots G1 Optimus Prime in the head, inflicting [illegible]

"OPTIMAL SITUATION"

As the timestorm threatens to tear apart the fabric of time and space, Blackarachnia realizes that the reversal of history will nullify her entire existence. She activates the Ark's computer, Teletran-1, and secures Megatron in a defensive pod. Autobot Silverbolt, Blackarachnia stabilizes Primes condition and, nearly exhausted herself, goes to make repairs to the Autobot leader. Prime's Spark/the Matrix is absorbed by Optimus Prime (mutated) into a new Optimus. Optimus turns Meanwhile, the *Axalon* finally breaks in two under Predacon firepower and falls into an abyss. With Optimus Prime's Spark restored, the Maximals, along with Blackarachnia, set up a new base in the Ark.

"DEEP METAL"

Maximal Depth Charge detects the *Axalon*'s original cargo from deep space. Ever since a slaughter on Colony Unicron, Depth Charge has been seeking the perpetrator, Protoform X (now recreated as the Predacon Rampage). Piloting his transwarp cruiser back in time to prehistoric Earth, Depth Charge emerges victorious as a manta ray. The two old adversaries battle, but Rampage escapes. Dinosaur, though, goes to Rampage, who destroys Depth Charge's ship, stranding him.

"NEMESIS" PART 1

Now a Transmetal II dragon, Megatron locates the Decepticon ship, refurbished and fitted with transwarp engines, in Tarantulas' lair. Just as he and the cloned Transmetal Dinobot are about to take off, Depth Charge finally kills Rampage. This reinstates the missing part of Dinobot's Spark, causes memories of his heroic past to surface. As Primal and Tigerhawk rush to the Ark, the *Nemesis* rises from the water.

"NEMESIS" PART 2

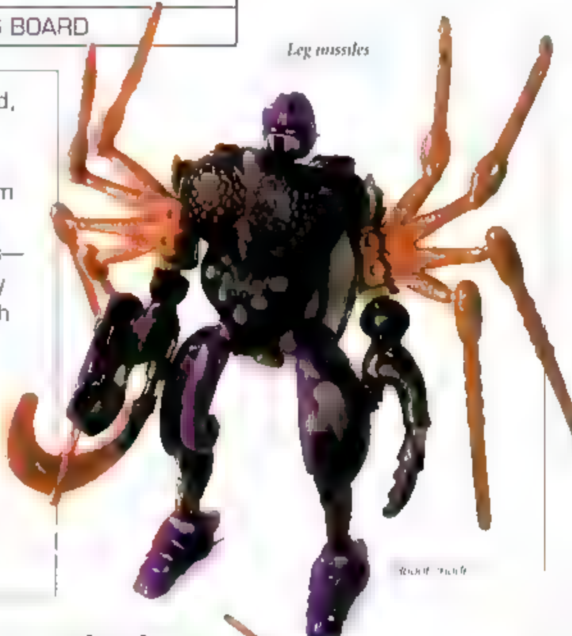
As Megatron unleashes the *Nemesis*' firepower, Prime returns to the Ark to prepare its defenses. Tigerhawk holds back the *Nemesis* as long as possible but eventually is destroyed, and Megatron moves the ship into position above the (still buried) Ark. When the Ark's engines fail, Dinobot (remembering his heroic last stand) directs the Maximals to an Autobot shuttle. Rhinox rams the *Nemesis*, as Primal and Megatron meet in final battle. The *Nemesis* crashes down to Earth again, and the Maximals head back to Cybertron aboard the shuttle, the Beast Wars finally over.

Silverbolt

BEAST WARS TOYS

FLYING, LEAPING, SWINGING OFF THE DRAWING BOARD

BEFORE A SINGLE frame of the TV series was rendered, the Beast Wars toyline was already off the drawing board and heading for toy stores across the United States and Europe. The line was a dramatic departure from the G1 and G2 toys in that initially there were no vehicles at all, just alternate beast modes with many extra features—more, in fact, than could be animated. The toys' secondary "mutant" heads didn't feature in the TV series at all, though Forward and DiTillio had considered making them into "battle helmets," and plans to make Optimus Primal a triple changer (robot/ape/bat modes) were shelved. The Transmetal toys were again robots, without molded fur or organic styling. The line included new characters and new versions of existing characters, all with three modes. Their beast modes, while still "beast" in style, now had vehicular/flight enhancements and third modes



Leg missiles

Robot mode

Blackarachnia

Blackarachnia's screen [illegible] appearance differed radically from the toy, which is actually a repaint of Tarantulas. As with Tarantulas, the serrated [illegible] edges of the claws were smoother [illegible] somewhat for [illegible] Blackarachnia's legs are detachable [illegible] as firing missiles when inserted [illegible] the grapple gun. The grapple itself could also be fired, the hook and cord allowing the toy to be suspended like a spider.

Beast mode

Robot mode

Optimus Primal

Featuring 14 points of articulation and a wealth of built-in or handheld weaponry, the Optimus Primal figure is a crowd-pleaser. Originally released in bat form, Primal's gorilla styling, with its textured fur lines, came later. The robot mode includes two pop-up shoulder-mounted missile launchers (which actually fire missiles), two swords [illegible] into a [illegible]-barreled cannon. As in beast mode, Primal's arms move, allowing [illegible] and held weapons to be swung back and forth.

Beast mode

Movable forearms

Robot mode

Jaguar

Released by Takara as part of their Beast Wars Metals line, Jaguar was based on Ravage. Introduced in the TV episode "The Agenda" Part 1. Working from a Transmetal Cheetor body, the designers rebuilt the basic figure to make it transform and move differently. The chest panel opens to reveal internal detail and a Predacon insignia. Separate stickers came in the pack, including a Decepticon insignia and one featuring G1 Megatron's head!

Thrusters fold out for flight mode

Beast mode

Beast mode

Quickstrike

Part of the 1998 Fuzor sub-line of Beast Wars toys. Quickstrike's beast mode is actually two beasts (scorpion and cobra) in one. The claws snap open and closed, as do the jaws of his cobra head. The cobra head itself contains a bladder that can be filled with water and squirted to simulate spitting venom. His oversized claw arm is a weapon in its own right, and can grip, whip, and thrust.

Beast mode

Optimus Minor

Optimus Minor is part of the second wave of Transmetals, which dispensed with the third mode but included a marble-style "Spark Crystal." He is not another version of Optimus Primal, but rather a character in his own right (a cybernetically enhanced Ground Commander). Not featured in the TV show, Optimus Minor was both robot and ape (more monkey than gorilla), with detachable tail/whip weapon. The beast-mode head splits to reveal the robot-mode head within.

Robot mode

Detachable tail/whip

Robot mode

Robot mode

Beast mode

Silverbolt

Among the first of the deluxe Fuzors, Silverbolt (like Quickstrike) takes the Beast Wars line into a heightened dimension of beasts drawn more from myth and legend than reality. Molded to fuse the wolf and eagle elements of his makeup, the underside of Silverbolt's wings feature pseudo-fur styling, while the tops are feathered like a bird. The tips of each wing eject (at the push of a peg) the feather missiles doubling as handheld weapons in robot mode.

BEAST MACHINES

AFTER THE EPIC, but essentially upbeat, resolution of Beast Wars, the Beast Machines animated series, which first aired in 1998 took us to a darker more dangerous world. Set on Cybertron, Beast Machines introduced a drastically altered reality in which Megatron is ruler of all Cybertron and Optimus Primal's Maximals are outnumbered and outgunned by Megatron's Vehicon Drones. The series ran hand-in-hand with a new toyline and opened the door to an intriguing and challenging proposition what if the metal world of Cybertron had once been an organic planet... and could be again?

THE REFORMATTING

A PLANET DIVIDED!

AT THE END of *Beast Wars*, the Maximals head home to Cybertron aboard an Autobot shuttle "borrowed" from the Ark. Megatron, magno-clamped to the hull, is their helpless prisoner. But at the start of *Beast Machines*, all that has changed. The remaining Maximals—Optimus Primal, Rattrap, Blackarachnia, and Cheetor—find themselves on Cybertron in their original beast modes (from *Beast Wars* Season 1) and on the run from hordes of mindless drones called Vehicons. Megatron now rules an eerily deserted Cybertron. With no memory of the final stages of their journey home, the Maximals must both fill in the blanks and liberate their homeworld.

In his new, evolved body, Megatron leads the Vehicon army.

EVADING CAPTURE

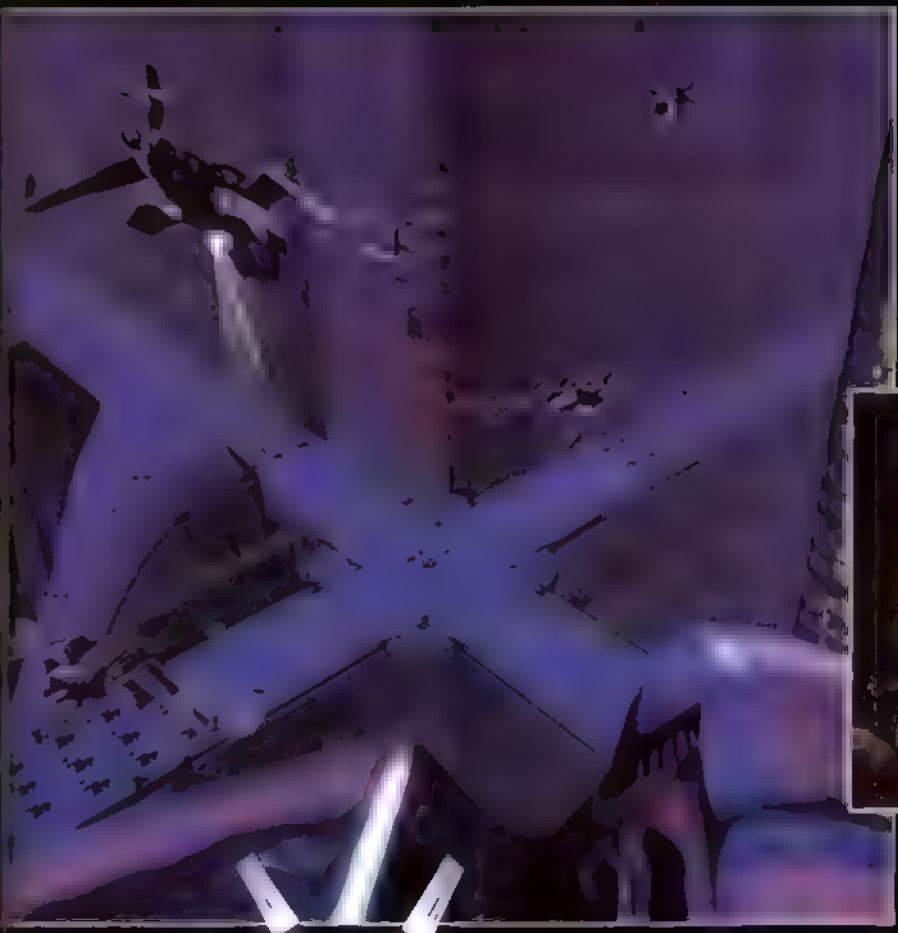
To find out how Megatron went from being their prisoner to ruler of all Cybertron, the Maximals downloaded flight data from the Autobot shuttle. They discover that, on the journey back from prehistoric Earth to present-day Cybertron, they hit a time disturbance and Megatron was sucked into a wormhole. He then landed on Cybertron months ahead of the Maximals' arrival.

Vehicons

Megatron enslaved Cybertron's population through a transformation virus and stripped out their Sparks, turning their inert metal forms into a Sparkless Vehicon drone army. Each Vehicon variation (tank, motorcycle, drill, and airborne jet) is stamped out of an identical mold. Megatron controls his mass-produced army by the power of thought alone.

Beast Machines Cybertron

Infected by Megatron's transformation virus, the Maximals are trapped in their early, organic beast forms, unable to revert to robot mode. They are forced to flee into Cybertron's subterranean depths. The planet's main city, Cybertropolis, is dark and desolate, with no trace of the billions of Maximals and Predacons that once filled its cyber-lanes. Deep within Cybertron, the Maximals encounter the Oracle, which purges the transformation virus from their systems and grants them new, upgraded robot/alternate modes.



ORGANIC ROOTS

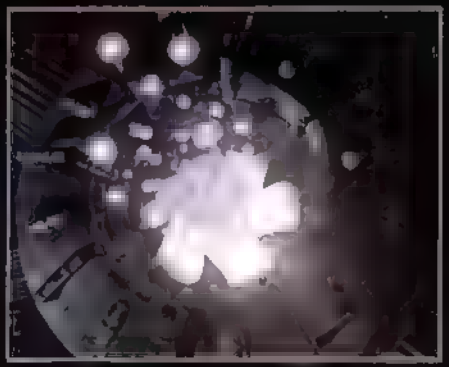
Beneath the surface of the planet, the Maximals make a shocking discovery. Ancient fossils reveal that Cybertron once supported a full range of organic life, and a lush grove of plants and trees still flourishes at its core.

DIAGNOSTIC DRONE

Systematically attempting to purge his body of organic matter, Megatron relies heavily on his automated Diagnostic Drone to monitor his evolving form. Though Spinkless, the Drone has independent thought and takes seriously its job of repairing and upgrading Megatron's systems. The Drone's access to Megatron is later exploited by Vehicon General, Tanker.

Transformation Virus

Megatron's first step in erasing organic life on Cybertron was to create a virus that would rob its inhabitants of their ability to transform—and thereby to fight back. Early Vehicon Drones fired canisters of the virus into the planet's densely populated areas.



THE ORACLE

The Oracle is a primary interface portal of the massive Vector Sigma mainframe that taps Matrix energy from the planet core. Its long-term aim is to restore the balance between Cybertron's organic and technological aspects.

MAXIMALS

STRANGERS IN A STRANGE LAND

THE BEAST WARS tested the Maximals to the limits of their endurance (and beyond). Now the Maximal warriors require even greater depths of courage and fortitude in order to free Cybertron from Megatron and his Vehicon hordes. The Oracle—the intelligence at the heart of Cybertron itself—forged the Maximals into freedom fighters, equipping them with new techno-organic forms in an effort to thwart Megatron's plans. Now championing Cybertron's organic roots, the Maximals prepare for their greatest battle.

Rack mounted jump jets allow short range flight

Growing Pains

The transition from early beast modes to advanced Cybertronian quasi-organic configurations (courtesy of the Oracle) was by no means straightforward. The Maximals were still affected by the last vestiges of Megatron's transformation virus, and the new forms were highly sophisticated. Each Maximal had to attain new inner levels of purity and control to switch from beast to robot mode. Intensive training programs followed, mastery coming in slow painful stages.

INTELLIGENCE ENDURANCE
RANK

Optimus Primal

Now instinctively linked to the Oracle, Optimus Primal serves not only as Maximal leader but also as all-important liaison between Cybertron's guiding intelligence and its defenders. Able to sense when back-to-low Maximals are in danger, Primal also has unequalled insight into the distant past and the future.

INTELLIGENCE ENDURANCE
RANK FIRE

Cheetor

In beast mode, Cheetor's speed and agility [illegible] that scatters opponents. In robot mode, [illegible] Cheetor grows quickly to [illegible] he can still be somewhat brash.

In spider mode, Blackarachnia can send electrical "stinger" pulses through the ground.

BLACKARACHNIA

Biggest issue Jenette shared with Beast Wars just as well Black[illegible] to[illegible] Maximals just as well Maximals, Predacons and Terrorcons alike, Metallic[illegible] made size and weight[illegible] great strength[illegible] foes or protect[illegible]

WEB-THROWING

Blackarachnia's wrists webs like discuses which explode[illegible] trap and drain[illegible] Other web-[illegible]

Nightscream's winged feet allow him to remain airborne in both modes.

NIGHTSCREAM

Curiosity drew[illegible] original bat creature. Nightscream[illegible] be Maximals[illegible] Unity Wars among[illegible] first to experience the sheer power of[illegible] ear-splitting sonic screech. Badly injured[illegible] Nightscream was rescued[illegible] by the Dracon's power. Now a techno-organic[illegible] robot[illegible] as razor-sharp claws[illegible] can[illegible] and[illegible] his "vampire bite"[illegible] Nightscream[illegible] victims[illegible] upon[illegible] long[illegible] can also be fired[illegible]

RATTRAP

Of all the Maximals, Rattrap[illegible] transforming into[illegible] mouse the most[illegible] character in early battles[illegible] was prone to violent[illegible] combination scenes in which both worlds would[illegible] and happily[illegible] Rattrap[illegible] sustain[illegible] bursts of rapid[illegible] and[illegible] least[illegible] his[illegible] a variety of functions[illegible] tapping into[illegible] terminals[illegible] locking doors[illegible] and laser cutting[illegible]

VEHICONS

OLD ALLIES, NEW ENEMIES

MEGATRON CREATED THE Vehicons to round up Cybertron's inhabitants and ultimately remove their Sparks. These mindless drones fulfilled Megatron's dream of a world unhampered by individual free will. But free will and imagination have their advantages, as the Maximals demonstrated by repeatedly trouncing the Vehicon forces. So in order to thwart the Maximals, Megatron created Vehicon Generals, using captive, subverted Maximal Sparks to instill each drone with creativity and flair on the battlefield. For the Maximals, the agonising truth about their new adversaries could only serve to undermine their courageous spirit.

MEGATRON

Now encased in a robotic suit of armor, Megatron was truly in control of Cybertron. Hard-wired into the planet itself via his diagnostic drone, he was able to command his Vehicon troops and reshape distant matter with a single thought. But within the robotic shell his techno-organic beast form still existed, and in times of severe stress or rage he reverted to his fire-spitting Transmetal II dragon mode.

Neural interface cables for hyper-access to Cybertron's technological infrastructure

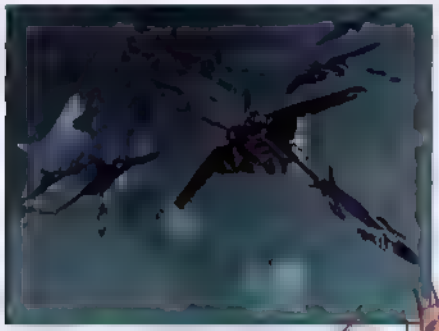
DRAGON MODE

Unwilling to risk any possible [illegible] to his Spark, Megatron [illegible] to submit to the procedure that would give him a purely robotic body.

Megatron's dragon mode breathes devastating streams of fire and ice

Airborne mode

Anti gravity generators



Obsidian in airborne mode

Combustion blasters double as thrusters in jet mode

OBSIDIAN

[illegible] expert in military strategy [illegible] highly focused. But in battle his ferocity is awesome to behold. His heat-seeking missiles can bore to depths of 2,600 feet (800 meters). His fingers retract into his lower arms, revealing artillery ports.

INTELLIGENCE 7 ENDURANCE 7
SPEED [illegible] SKILL 5 STAMINA 8
COURAGE 8 RANK 6 FIREPOWER 6

JETSTORM

Modeled on Megatron's standard Aero-Drone template, Jetstorm is as fast in the air as he is with his verbal repartee. While he's firing plasma bombs on an enemy, he'll be wisecracking away, his homicidal tendencies equaled only by his vitriolic sarcasm. Fast and maneuverable in airborne mode, Jetstorm does not actually touch down in robot mode, preferring to hover. To the Maximals' horror, they discover that within Jetstorm is the Spark of their former comrade—the noble and selfless Silverbolt.

Antigravity generators for hover mode

INTELLIGENCE 8 ENDURANCE 8
SPEED [illegible] SKILL 7 STAMINA 8
COURAGE 7 RANK 9 FIREPOWER 9

THRUST

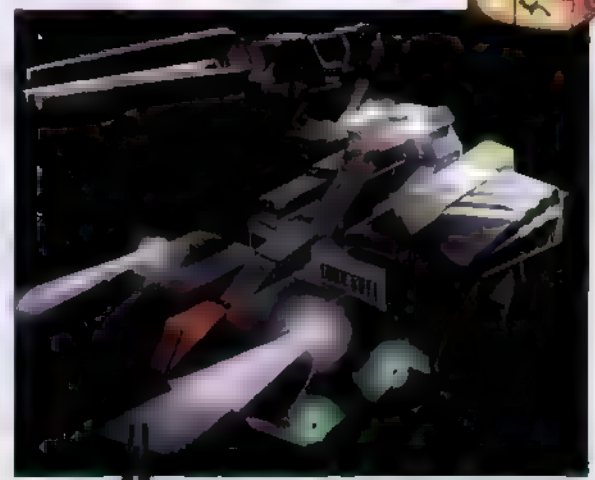
Mysterious and self-centered, Thrust likes the image of himself as a brooding loner. (In fact, his Spark is that of brooding loser Wasp-stor!) Commander of the Cycle Drones and the only Vehicon General not in awe of Megatron, Thrust has his own agenda. He's never openly rebellious, but he possesses an independent streak unique among Megatron's inner circle.

One of Thrust's arms is an energy weapon, the other a grappling hook.

INTELLIGENCE 7 ENDURANCE 8 5
SPEED [illegible] SKILL 5 STAMINA 8 5
COURAGE [illegible] RANK 9 FIREPOWER 9

THRUST CYCLE MODE

In cycle mode, Thrust is extremely fast and can handle the tightest twists and turns. He fires multiple pulse bursts from his front wheel while a thruster-boosted [illegible]



INTELLIGENCE 7 ENDURANCE 8
SPEED [illegible] SKILL 7 STAMINA 9
COURAGE 9 RANK 8 FIREPOWER 7

TANKOR

Initially simple-minded, Tankor existed purely to crush and grind everything and everyone under his treads. Unless, of course, he had already blown it with his flamejet cannon. The Maximals were shocked to discover that Tankor's Spark was [illegible] of the Nyan Rhinos of Cybertron's Savage Valley. They realized that Tankor had [illegible] enhancements which [illegible] In robot mode, head-mounted lasers augment Tankor's arsenal.

BEAST MACHINES

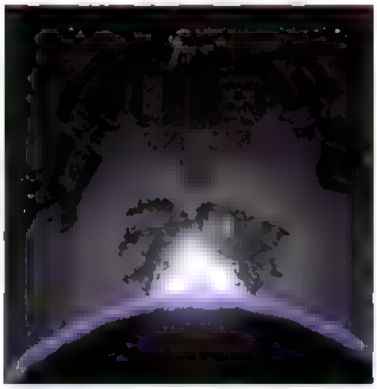
TV SEASONS 1 & 2

SELECTED EPISODES FROM THE REFORMATTED SERIES

WITH TWO SEASONS totaling 26 episodes airing over two years, Beast Machines took up the CG-animated gauntlet thrown down by Beast Wars and turned the entire TRANSFORMERS universe on its head. Though clearly spinning out of storylines from the previous series, new script editors Bob Skir and Marty Isenberg created something radically new, forcing fans to reexamine their preconceptions about the TRANSFORMERS and Cybertron itself. As the first episode, "The Reformatting," opens, the viewer (not to mention the Maximals) has genuinely no clue as to the what, why, and how of Megatron's dark machinations.

"THE REFORMATTING"

"FIRES OF THE PAST"



"REVELATIONS" 1: "DISCOVERY"

"REVELATIONS" 2: "DESCENT"

"REVELATIONS" 3: "APOCALYPSE"

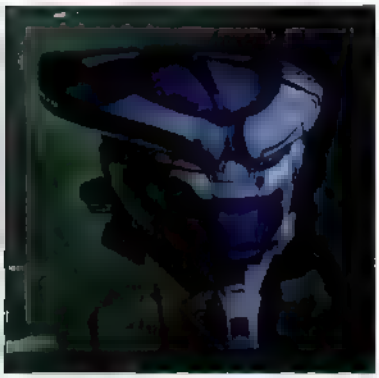
"THE KEY"

"END OF THE LINE"

Tankor watches Megatron prepare a doomsday weapon in the shape of a planetary pulse powered by the Key to Vector Sigma. Hoping that Megatron will destroy his own organic components with the weapon, Tankor alerts Optimus Primal to the threat. Primal accesses the Plasma Energy Chamber, an age-old device capable of wiping out electrical/mechanical life. As Megatron unleashes his Key, Primal opens the Plasma Energy Chamber. The two forces collide catastrophically.

"FALLOUT"

As the released Plasma Energy and Vector Sigma forces clash, Megatron and Primal are repeatedly destroyed and recreated. Finally, Primal absorbs both energies and redirects them into the Oracle. When the Maximals thought they had only his collapsed shell, Cheetor and the others detect Primal's distressed Spark appealing for him to return. Primal is unwilling to be revived that by accessing the Plasma Energy Chamber, he went against his most deeply held principles. But the Oracle convinces him he acted wisely, and his Spark is given a new body.



"HOME SOIL"

When a shuttle crash-lands on Cybertron, the Maximals investigate. They discover techno-organic matter within, and are attacked by a [illegible] plant monster. Silverbolt [now released from his petrified wave-form] unwittingly allows the creature to escape, and the Maximals pursue it underground. Sensing "potential," Primal exposes the creature to the Oracle's power and it is recreated as Botanica, a Cybertronian explorer. Botanica and her team had been accidentally transformed into plant-based TRANSFORMERS, but on receiving a distress call headed back to Cybertron. Botanica makes short work of a troop of Vehicons.

"SPARKWAR" 1: "THE STRIKE"

Frustrated by Thrust's lack of success against the Maximals, Megatron creates new Generals in the shape of Strika and Obsidian. Veterans of many hundreds of campaigns, the duo swiftly plans an attack [bolstered by new waves of Vehicons] on the Maximals. As battle begins, the Maximals are lulled into a false sense of security, believing Obsidian and Strika to be rather dim-witted. In fact, they're the opposite, and soon the Maximals are pinned down in Megatron's old ground citadel. The Oracle alerts Botanica to the Maximals' impending destruction, and she bores into the citadel, allowing the Maximals to retreat.

"SPARKWAR" 2: "THE SEARCH"

Primal begins to search for the missing Sparks. Botanica and Rattrap head for Megatron's citadel, while Cheetor, Blackarachnia and Silverbolt search the TRANSFORMER junkyard [illegible] (see pages 12-13). Primal interfaces with a hologram of Optimus Prime. But it's a trap—the hologram is actually Megatron, intent on securing the Oracle's access codes. As Vehicon armies converge, Nightscream and Nemesis/Savage [a projection of part of Megatron's psyche] converge. Nightscream and Primal reveals he knew the interface was false, but wanted the location of missing Sparks from Megatron's mind.

"SPARKWAR" 3: "THE SIEGE"

Using the Oracle, Megatron evolves himself to a new level. Primal, Rattrap, Botanica, and Blackarachnia sneak aboard a shuttle bound for Megatron's flying base. Once in, they attack Megatron just as he begins to consume his stored Sparks. Nemesis/Savage is killed as Megatron grows in size and power, and the Maximals fall helpless before him. But Nightscream unleashes a sonic scream that disrupts Megatron's Spark, and he appears to fade out of existence. The Sparks are stored in a containment field.

"SPARK OF DARKNESS"

With the war seemingly over, Vehicon Generals Obsidian and Strika defect to the Maximals. But Megatron's Spark still exists, and it stalks Silverbolt and Blackarachnia. Finally, Rattrap captures it within a diagnostic drone. But Obsidian and Strika, on learning that Megatron still lives, revert to their Vehicon ways and steal the drone. Grimly, the Maximals anticipate a final assault by Megatron and the Vehicons.

"ENDGAME" 1: "THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL"

Megatron's drone [illegible] begin churning out Vehicons for a renewed offensive. Megatron downloads his Spark into a new body modeled on Primal's Optimal Optimus form, from the latter stages of the Beast Wars. Now in control of Megatron's flying base (and its cargo of Sparks), the Maximals embark on a plan to complete the reformatting of Cybertron according to the Oracle's wishes. The Vehicons attack the flying base, and Rattrap raises the shields. Unfortunately, in doing so he cuts Botanica off from Cybertron's organic core, which nearly kills her. The shields fail and the base is shot down. The Vehicons converge.

"ENDGAME" 2: "WHEN LEGENDS FALL"

The Maximals regroup at the downed flying base and repel the first waves of attacking Vehicons. But they are soon close to being overwhelmed, and the captive Sparks make a collective decision to aid the Maximals. Using the Oracle as a conduit, they empty their power into Primal, and—transformed into nonrobotic energy beings—they decimate the Vehicon ranks. But when Megatron telepathically severs the connection with the Oracle, the Maximals are left helpless. Cheetor sends Obsidian and Strika shooting into space, and ultimately the Maximals fall and their Sparks are extracted. Now, Megatron faces off against Optimus Primal.

"ENDGAME" 3: "SEEDS OF THE FUTURE"

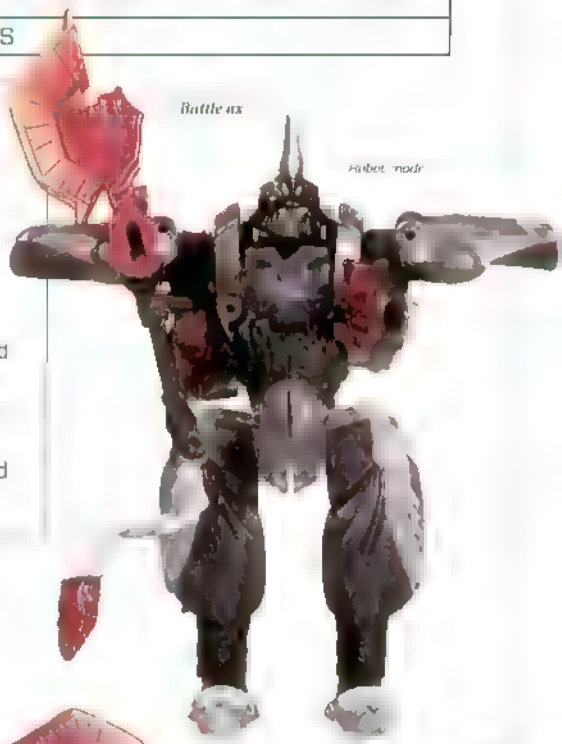
Primal and Megatron's titanic battle fails to produce a winner. Megatron ups the stakes by opening the Spark containment chamber, unleashing a Spark maelstrom. Making one final effort to destroy all organic life on Cybertron, Megatron forces down to the planetary core. Now connected to the Oracle and empowered by countless Sparks, Megatron prepares to unleash the Key to Vector Sigma, but then Primal releases his own Oracle powers to blast Megatron and Nemesis/Savage over the deep pit. Suddenly, they both plunge to their doom. Through their waning life essences, the Oracle reformats the planet into a new, techno-organic paradise.

Botanica

BEAST MACHINES TOYS

TWILIGHT OF THE BEASTS

ALTHOUGH BEAST-FORM TRANSFORMERS would continue to be a part of the toyline, Beast Wars and Beast Machines had all but exhausted the potential of this divergent strand. Beast Machines, in many ways, represents the best of both worlds, with its quota of highly sophisticated animalistic and purely vehicular toys. The various Drones and their subsequent General incarnations are both a nod to Generations past and an indicator of things to come. Once again, not all the toys would make it into the TV show, and those that did would often not get the full CG treatment. The Tank Drone, for instance, was simply remodeled slightly for the debut of Tankor, while the Tankor toy is quite different. In many ways, this only increased the appeal and collectibility of the toys.

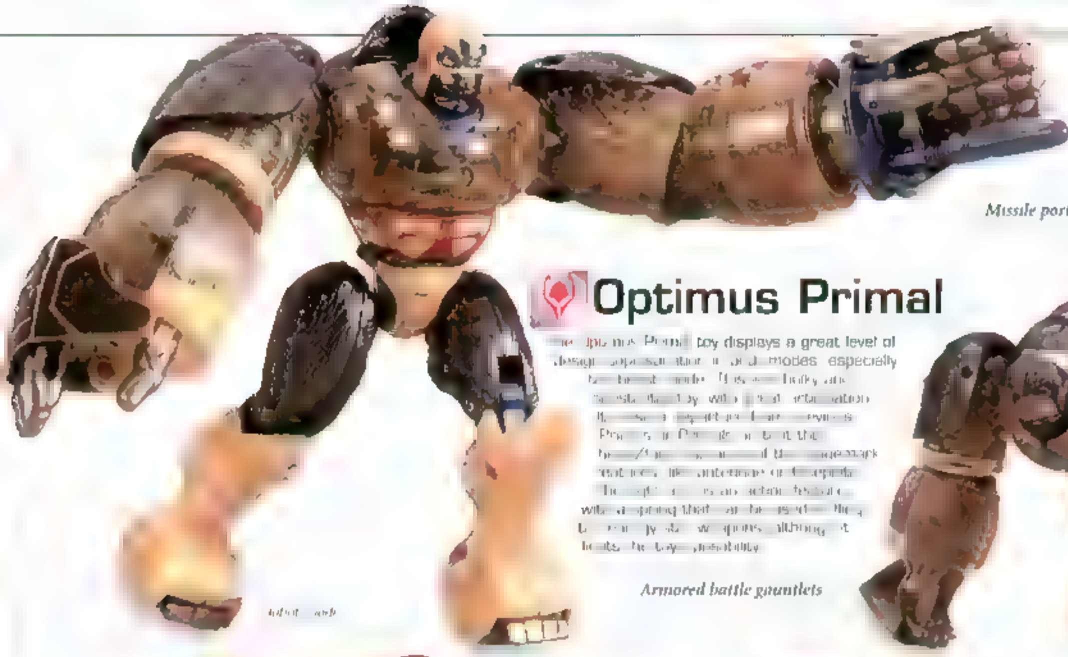


Tank Drone

The basic Tank Drone toy (though smaller than the earlier "mega" Tankor variant) has many of the same features, being [illegible] far closer to the eventual CG-prototype than all but a few Beast Machines toys ever did. Like most Drones, the Tank Drone has features such as [illegible] with a firing missile. The [illegible] has a pair of upward-pointing [illegible] positions, [illegible] holding down the Spark crystal and [illegible] it forward takes the same spin and fire.

Battle Unicorn

Part of the Battle of the Spark line, a range of Beast Machines toys that [illegible] the Beast Wars toyline, Battle Unicorn [illegible] is best known for its [illegible] Toy-only detail [illegible] Warrior Beast [illegible] silent-approach hooves, [illegible] visible in toy terms. Battle Unicorn had good articulation and [illegible] that formed his spine and tail in beast mode.

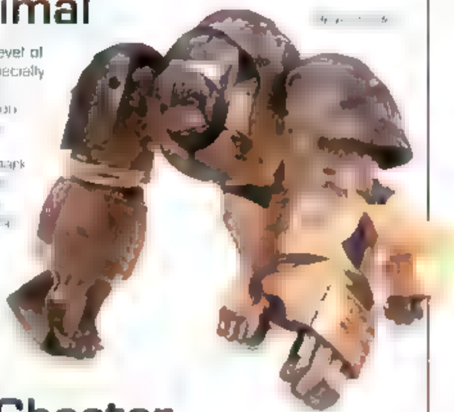


Missile port

Optimus Primal

[illegible] toy displays a great level of [illegible] modes, especially [illegible]

Armored battle gauntlets

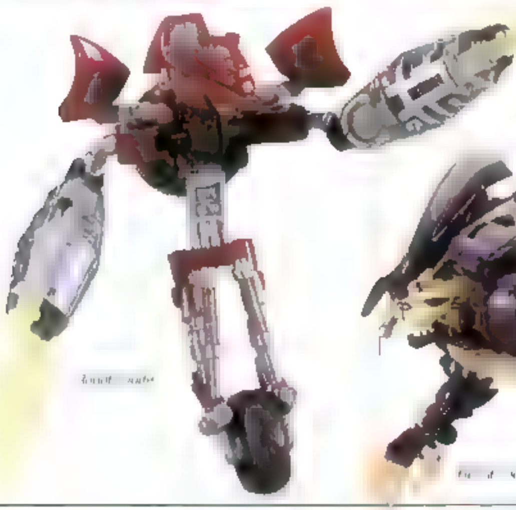


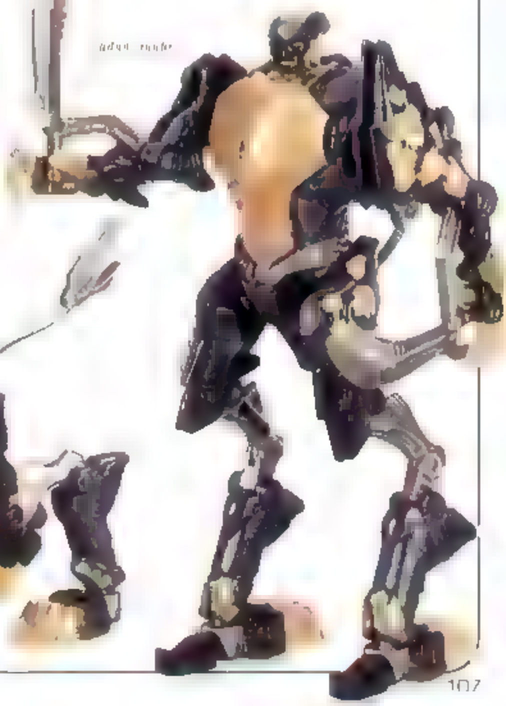
Cheetor

This third deluxe version of Cheetor [illegible] Night [illegible] [illegible]

Motorcycle Drone

The Motorcycle Drone is a good example of a Drone toy that closely resembles its TV show counterpart. More powerful-looking than the [illegible]





TRANSFORMERS ROBOTS IN DISGUISE

IN THE ESTABLISHED course of events, TRANSFORMERS toylines and TV series were developed and produced in the US with input from Japanese toy manufacturer Takara, and then reworked for the Japanese market. In the case of Robots in Disguise, the opposite is true. Robots in Disguise began life in Japan as Car Robots, a G1 inspired toyline and animated TV series. The toys were subsequently repackaged and renamed for the US market under the Robots in Disguise banner, and a revoiced and slightly modified version of the TV show aired in late 2001. For many western viewers, this was the first direct access they had to Japanese TRANSFORMERS toys and TV shows.

TRANSFORMERS ROBOTS IN DISGUISE TOYS:

A NEW WAVE

ROLE REVERSALS

THE JAPANESE TV series "Car Robots" is an old-fashioned good-versus-evil struggle between two factions of robotic beings. Set on Earth in the year 2001, the Cybertrons (or Autobots) have integrated themselves wholly into Earth society, though their presence is not a matter of general knowledge. When the evil Destrons arrive, the battle for Earth begins in earnest. Fire Convoy (the Optimus Prime–style character) and Galvatron (Megatron) are the respective leaders, and Yuki Onishi is the young human who befriends and aids the Cybertrons. The TV series is a mix of *anime*-style cel animation with CG effects and backgrounds. The TV show and toys were adopted wholeheartedly by fans in the United States when they made their debut as Robots in Disguise in 2001.

Hightower

Hightower clearly displays his pre-G1 [illegible] in his Car Robots incarnation. [illegible]

Spychangers

[illegible] Autobot WARS [illegible] and REV (a.k.a. Eagle Hunter), launched as G2 Gobots, these mini-TRANSFORMERS came with weapons (a rarity [illegible]

Optimus Prime

[illegible] dialogue ("Optimus Prime, maximum [illegible] original G1 Optimus Prime, the [illegible] "Matrix" chest cavity.

The Autobot

Car Brothers

[illegible] G1 Autobots returned for Car [illegible]

Rapid Run

Train toys featured heavily in the early Japanese Takara line of TRANSFORMERS, and they appeared in Hasbro's range. These Diaclone Astro-Team aside, the transformation of the Car Robots JRX team into the Robots in Disguise Rail Racer team helped to fill that gap in the JS market. Originally released in the Car Robots line as J-7, Rapid Run's vehicular mode is based on a Rail Star–model train. Rapid Run's Autobot credentials list him as the toughest member of the Rail Racers, a character who loves a good brawl.

Train mode

Robot mode

Midnight Express

Originally released in Japan as J-4, Midnight Express is based on the Japanese Shinkansen (bullet train), in this case an E-4 Max E-jet Train. His colors [illegible] and fun-loving with his friends, tough and unrelenting with enemies. The wheels move in vehicle mode, allowing it to be pushed along.

Weapon attachment

Railspike

The third member of the Rail Racer trio, Railspike (formerly J-5, a Series 500 Nozomi Bullet Train) is courteous and intelligent, but that doesn't make him any less of a warrior. Railspike's color scheme is the most different from his original version. The Rail Racer team has one other interesting feature: the three component team members—Rapid Run, Midnight Express, and Railspike—combine to form the giant robot, Rail Racer.

Train mode

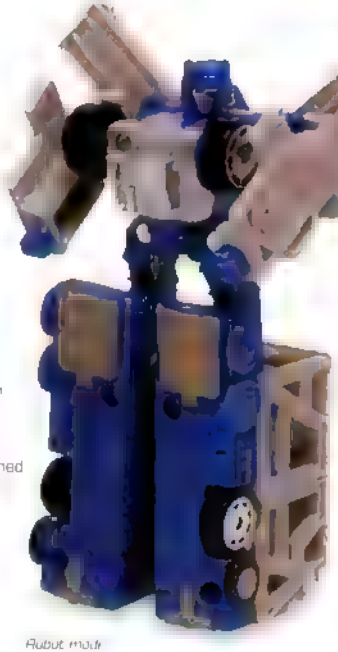
Weapon attachment

Train mode

Ultra Magnus

Called God Fire Convoy in the Car Robots line, Optimus Prime's trusted right-hand 'bot, Ultra Magnus, returns in Robots in Disguise. Available in two sizes, Magnus came as a larger, more detailed Ultra figure and a smaller basic figure (pictured here). In his Ultra configuration, Ultra Magnus could be combined with Optimus Prime to form the giant super robot Omega Prime. Both versions transform into a car carrier, a tip of the hat to Magnus' original G1 vehicle mode. Some of the Ultra version's armaments are not included on the basic figure.

Vehicle mode



Robot mode

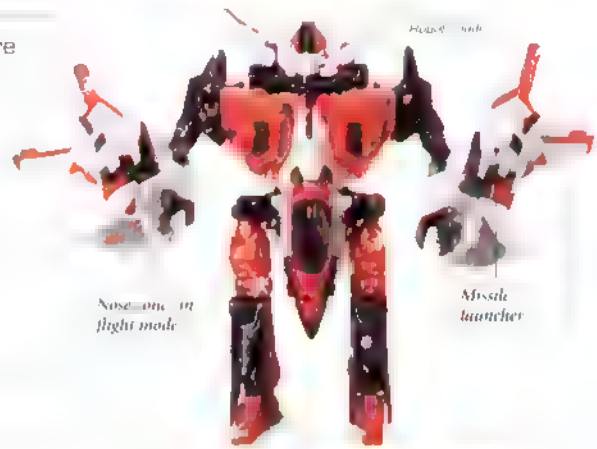
TRANSFORMERS ROBOTS IN DISGUISE TOYS:

AUTOBOTS AND DECEPTICONS

THOUGH SET IN an alternate reality outside of the core TRANSFORMERS continuity, the Robots in Disguise line harked back to the classic G1 era, with the emphasis on the battle between the Autobots and the Decepticons (known as Cybertrons and Destrons in Japan) and a largely vehicular cast. In the United States and Europe, the basic moulds of the Japanese line were upgraded with some new logos and western tech specs. Fire Convoy and Gigatron became Optimus Prime and Megatron, with other classic characters—Prowl and X-Brawn—making a welcome reappearance.

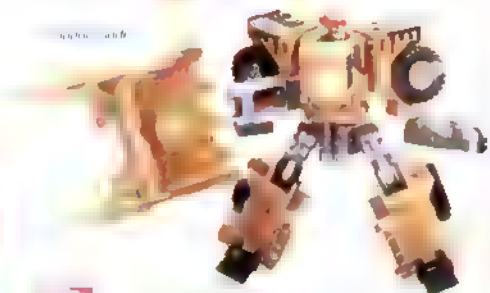
Storm Jet

The Robots in Disguise toy range featured several jet mode Autobots and Decepticons, including Storm Jet, Nightcruz, and Wind Sheer. Storm Jet has a temper to match his name. Though he controls it most of the [illegible]



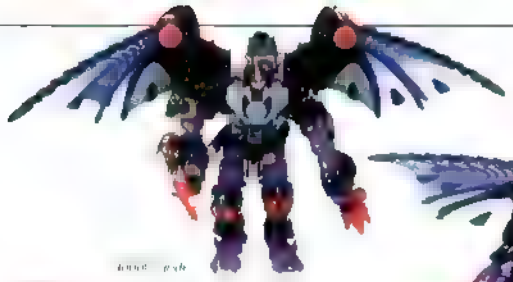
Mega-Octane

Combiners play a large part in the Robots in Disguise range, and Mega-Octane is one component (with Armorhide, Mover, Rotor and Rollbar) of giant robot Ruination. The highly popular G1 Combiners, the Combaticons, are here reimagined (as they had been previously in Generation 2), with Mega-Octane resembling G1's Oil Slick. Robot mode [illegible] Mega-Octane's [illegible] two alternate modes, [illegible] and [illegible] of Ruination [illegible] former Destrons. Mega-Octane's original insignia [illegible] with the more familiar Decepticon logo.



Heavy Load

Formerly called Build Typhoon, Heavy Load is part of the [illegible] construction vehicle team, along with Wedge [illegible] and Grimlock. He [illegible] A [illegible] Robots in Disguise [illegible] with [illegible] size. Thick armour [illegible] and [illegible] impact and [illegible] by well [illegible]



Rear cockpits

Megatron

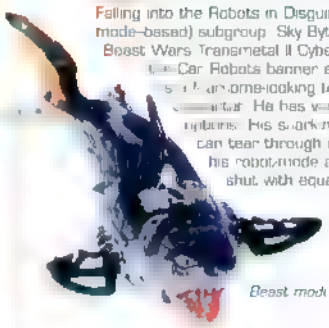
Megatron is the most sophisticated toy in the line, with no fewer than 10 alternate modes (robot, dragon, bat, car, claw, jet, cruiser, elephant, and two "devil" forms). Megatron, Car Robots assassin Galvatron, had a mere six modes when it was released, but Hasbro used the subsequent "Devil Galvatron" mold (with its extra 4 transformations) for Megatron.

Front blade

Tank treads

Wedge

Wedge, a.k.a. Build Boy, is a bulldozer/earth mover and the smallest member of the construction vehicle team. The front blade cannot be raised, but the toy has [illegible] and its [illegible] weapon.

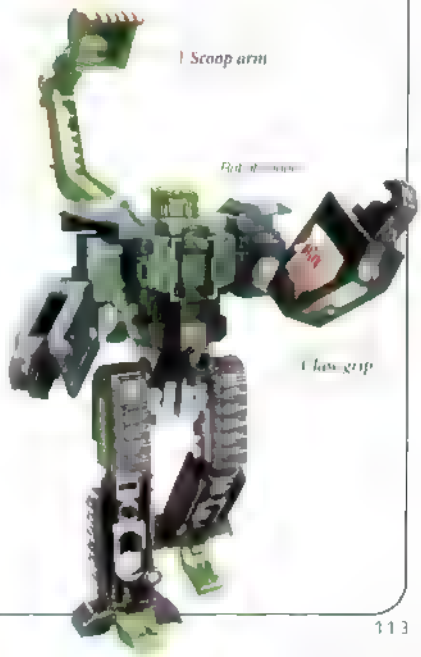


Beast mode

Sky Byte

Falling into the Robots in Disguise Predacon (beast mode–based) subgroup, Sky Byte actually began life as Beast Wars Transmetal II Cybershark. Brought under the Car Robots banner as Gelshark, Sky Byte's [illegible] chrome-looking body [illegible] metal. He has vast [illegible] options. His shark mode [illegible] can tear through any known metal, and his robot-mode anchor arm [illegible] shut with equally devastating [illegible]

Scoop arm



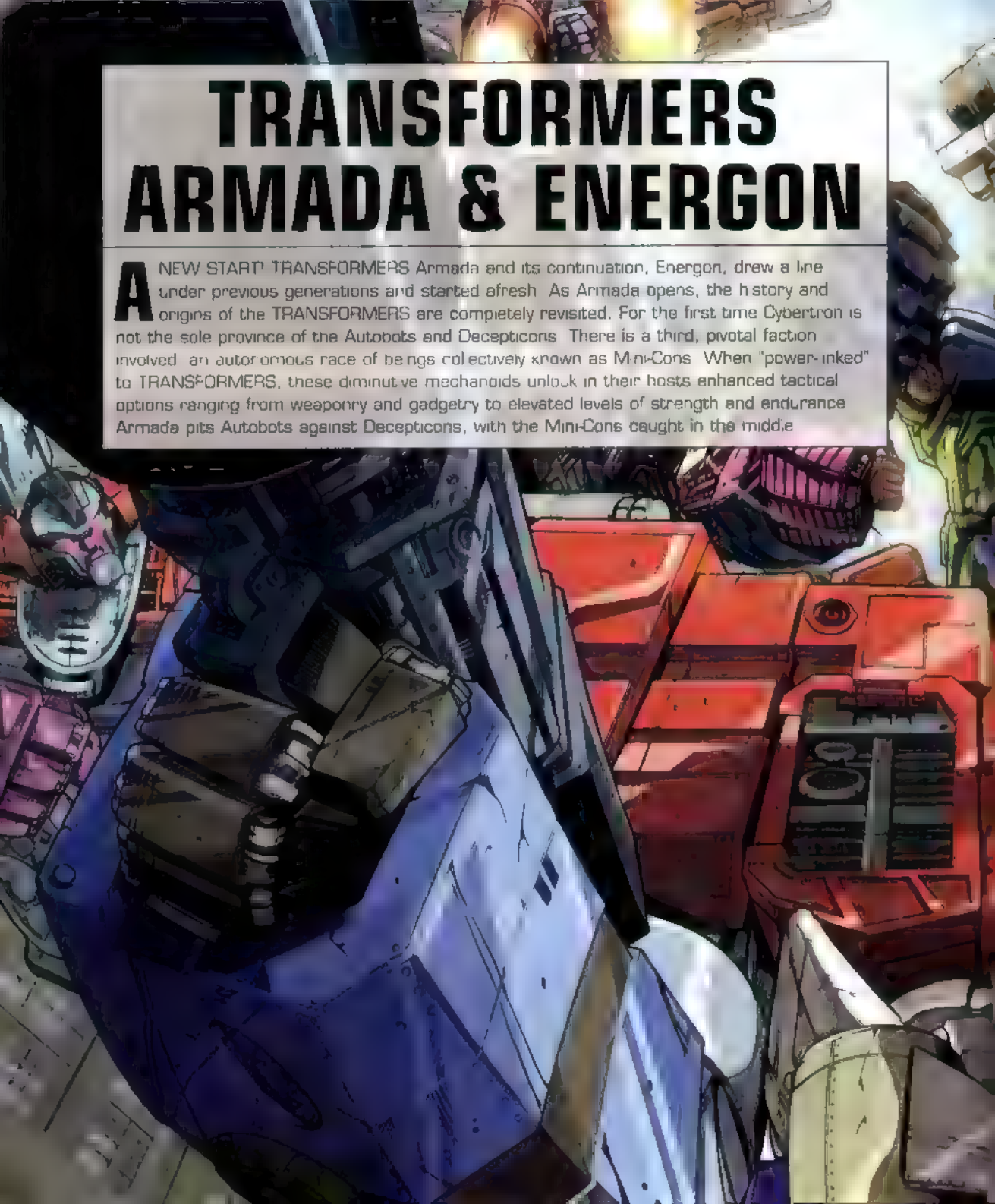
Claw grip

Grimlock

Not to be confused with the Dinobot of the same name, Robots in Disguise Grimlock [illegible] the four combining constructicons within TRANSFORMERS. Previously released in Japan as Build [illegible] the Grimlock toy is slightly [illegible] G1 Scorponok in terms of color and styling. Character-wise, Grimlock couldn't be more different from his G1 namesake, being both calm and upbeat, despite his [illegible] Generator.

TRANSFORMERS ARMADA & ENERGON

A NEW START! TRANSFORMERS Armada and its continuation, Energon, drew a line under previous generations and started afresh. As Armada opens, the history and origins of the TRANSFORMERS are completely revisited. For the first time Cybertron is not the sole province of the Autobots and Decepticons. There is a third, pivotal faction involved: an autonomous race of beings collectively known as Mini-Cons. When "power-linked" to TRANSFORMERS, these diminutive mechanoids unlock in their hosts enhanced tactical options ranging from weaponry and gadgetry to elevated levels of strength and endurance. Armada pits Autobots against Decepticons, with the Mini-Cons caught in the middle.



CYBERTRON REVISITED

A "SMALL" WAR... ON A COSMIC SCALE

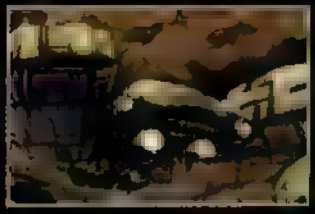
THE SAGA OF TRANSFORMERS Armada opens one million years ago. The Autobots judiciously regulate Cybertron from the glittering metropolis of Cyber-City. Large areas of the planet are designated Mini-Con sectors, home to Cybertron's second indigenous population of robots, the two races coexisting peacefully. But, as with previous Generations, there's a nest of vipers at the heart of this technological Eden: Decepticons. Megatron's campaign of terror begins by targeting the Mini-Cons and seeking to bend their power-enhancing abilities to his will....

CIVIL WAR

As civil war grips Cybertron, the Mini-Cons become pawns in Megatron's power struggle. The Decepticons round them up and force them into servitude. When Megatron's troops boost their powers to new levels and lay siege to Cyber-City, the Autobots—under the command of Optimus Prime—are hard-pressed to resist.

POWER-LINK!

In Megatron's underground base on Cybertron lie the dreaded "chop shops." These hellish production lines forcibly reconfigure Mini-Cons. Safety interlocks and built-in inhibitors are stripped out; new hyper-processors and "slave" clamps are attached, creating custom-made Decepticon Mini-Cons. When power-linked to their Decepticon host, Mini-Cons like Dirt Boss (*above*) have no choice but to give it their all... literally.

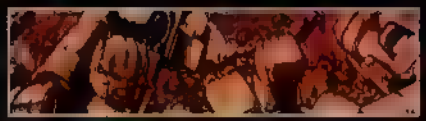


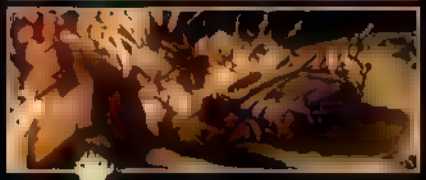
ESCAPE

Some Mini-Cons escape enslavement by Megatron, among them the valiant Sparkplug. The remaining Mini-Cons know it's only a matter of time before they too are enslaved by the Decepticons, and choose instead to leave Cybertron forever. Gathering all those still at liberty, the Mini-Cons board a large spacegoing vessel, and—much to Megatron's fury—escape from Cybertron, their enslaved comrades, and the civil war.

FLIGHT

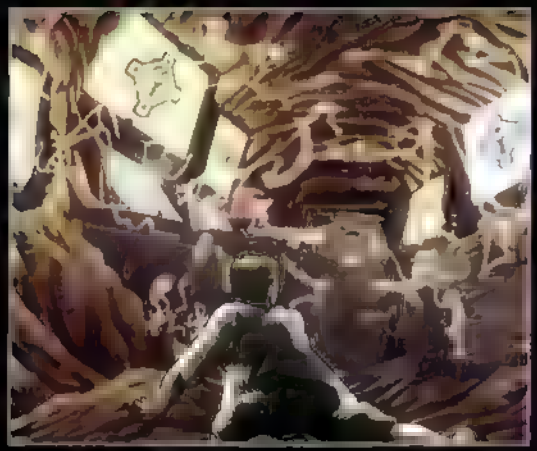
The Mini-Cons' intergalactic odyssey is cut dramatically short when one of the ship's engine modules blows out. Crippled, the ship plummets toward a nearby planet. The ship impacts first on the planet's moon, breaking in two, and the forward section travels onward, finally making planetfall... on Earth.





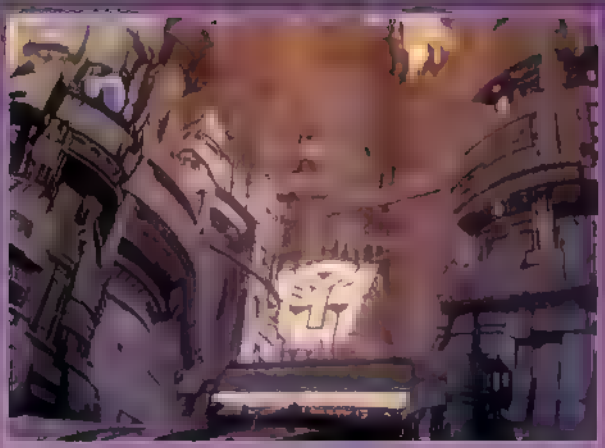
FIRST CONTACT

Fast-forward... and three high-school kids—Red, Carlos, and Alexis—stumble upon the crashed forward section of the Mini-Con ship. Now buried in the caverns beneath the city of Lincoln, Nebraska, the ship has lain undisturbed for over a million years, its occupants in protective stasis. Pursued through the cavern by school bullies Fred and Billy, Red plunges through loose rock, dropping into the heart of the Mini-Con ship.



REAWAKENING
Red's arrival in the main control hub of the former Mini-Con spacecraft initiates an automatic emergency protocol. Long-dormant systems come on line, generating a distress signal pulse that beams its way to the far side of the galaxy... and Cybertron. The Mini-Cons aboard the ship are brought out of stasis and power up to full operational status.

BATTLEGROUND: EARTH
Even as Red, Carlos, and Alexis befriend the Mini-Cons, the signal pulse reaches Cybertron, alerting both Megatron's Decepticons and Optimus Prime's Autobots. Megatron readies a hunting party, travelling to Earth in a matter of moments via a Space Bridge portal, and—with the Autobots in hot pursuit—the quest for the Mini-Cons begins anew.



Cyber-City
Before the Decepticon uprising and the subjugation of the Mini-Cons, Cybertron was a technological paradise. Towering above [illegible] its people and made [illegible] Its Art Deco jewel [illegible] the crowning glory was Cyber City with its vast gilded spires and sweeping interchanges. As with much of the rest of the planet, Cyber City came under the [illegible] of the Autobot Peacekeeping Assembly and swore to protect the general Cybertronian population. Through several [illegible] years, governing Mini-Cons, too, relied on the Autobots to keep Cybertron's local and galactic borders secure.

THE HALLS OF JUSTICE
Serving as the seat of Cybertronian power, [illegible] known as the Hall of Justice, the headquarters of the Autobot Peacekeeping Assembly, the Hall of Justice [illegible] the government of Cybercity. The towering building stands as a symbol of freedom and equality.

DECEPTICON HQ
In Megatron's [illegible] Cybertron, the [illegible] Decepticons [illegible] and out of [illegible] through terror.

TRANSFORMERS ARMADA

AUTOBOTS

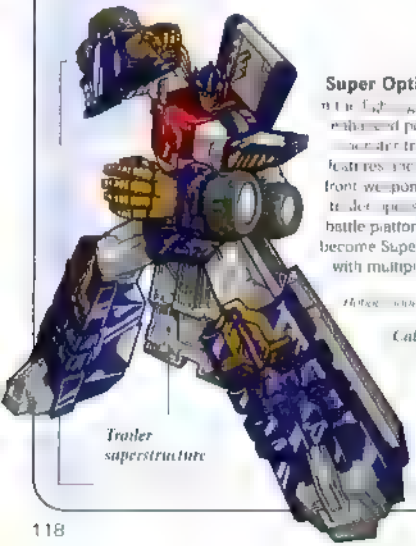
TRUTH, JUSTICE, AND FREEDOM

THEY ARE THE guardians of Cyber-City, a vast metropolis on the metal world of Cybertron. Under the command of Optimus Prime, the Autobots' aim is to keep the peace and promote liberty and justice for all. Sadly, those ideals aren't enough to save them from Megatron and the Decepticons, and the Autobots have been forced underground . . . literally. Now they fight both to liberate Cyber-City on Cybertron and to safeguard the inhabitants of Earth. Although they do not wish to compromise the freedom of the Mini-Cons, Cybertron's other transforming inhabitants, the Autobots need all the power that they can get if they are to defeat Megatron.

High-frequency radio wave shielding for secure battlefield transmissions

Optimus Prime

Dedicated to helping all living creatures wherever freedom is threatened, Optimus Prime's courage is surpassed only by his wisdom. Prime has seen enough war and strife to know that conflict must always be the last option. To that end, he tries to appeal to reason and logic, searching for a peaceful solution. But if that fails, then beware, because Prime is a fierce warrior, with years of combat experience and colossal strength and firepower on tap. You really don't want to get on the bad side of this 'bot.



Trailer superstructure

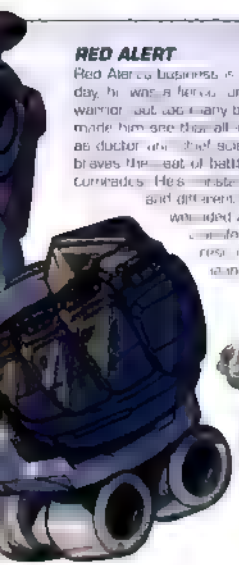
Super Optimus Prime

With the Cybertronian Matrix, Optimus Prime has enhanced powers and hardware on tap. His [illegible] truck trailer possesses unique features like defense mechanisms, including a front weapons pod and missile launcher. The trailer separates to become a Mini-Con base and battle platform, and, when combined, trailer and robot become Super Optimus Prime, a giant Transformer with multiple Mini-Con PowerLinx connection points.

Cab section

RED ALERT

Red Alert's business is saving lives. In his day, he was a fierce, uncompromising warrior, but too many battlefield casualties made him see that all he was creating. Now as doctor and chief science officer, Red Alert braves the heat of battle to reach fallen comrades. He's constantly searching for new and different ways to repair the wounded and sick. Red Alert transforms into a SUV rescue vehicle with firepod launcher and crane.



Subsonic blaster attachment

SMOKESCREEN

Smokescreen doesn't do anything fast. But when he does act, he makes it count. Smokescreen has no time for fancy fighting styles or combat [illegible]. He strikes, harasses, and retreats always one step ahead of the enemy. More than one adversary has mistaken Smokescreen's measured approach for vulnerability. He transforms into a heavy-duty crane, with extendable hoist/claw.

Magnetic grapple hook

Air velocity blaster parts

SCAVENGER

A long-time Autobot survivor at the top military academy for Cybertron, Scavenger is almost as seasoned a combatant and strategist as Optimus Prime. In fact, on many occasions Prime actively seeks the assistance and perspective Scavenger brings to any situation, no matter how difficult. Powerful and wise, Scavenger makes a detailed study of [illegible] before using their strengths and weaknesses. Scavenger transforms into a dozer with a super-reinforced scoop/shovel.

Reinforced superstructure

Combi warhead missile launcher

Hot Shot

[illegible]

TRANSFORMERS ARMADA

DECEPTICONS

FREEDOM EQUALS TYRANNY

INTELLIGENCE 10 | ENDURANCE 10
SPEED 10 SKILL 10 | STRENGTH 10
COURAGE 10 RANK 10 FIREBLAST 10

WHILE CYBERTRON FLOURISHED as a dual-race society, home to both Cybertronians and Mini-Cons another faction plotted and schemed in secret—a faction of malcontents bent on conquest through tyranny. The peaceful nature of Cybertronian society felt like shackles to Megatron, and others like him, who craved conflict and conquest above all else. But ironically, the very liberties he despised allowed Megatron the freedom he needed to stockpile weaponry and upgrade his own offensive capability, recruiting others who shared his dreams of universal domination

MEGATRON

This would-be dictator had his sights set on the vast power-enhancement potential of the Mini-Cons and he vowed to exploit it to the fullest. Though the Autobots were the superior force in terms of numbers, Megatron knew that, augmented by Mini-Con power and with the element of surprise they would fall beneath his conquering feet

CYCLONUS

Reckless and eager to impress, Cyclonus often throws caution—and the well-being of his fellow Decepticons—to the wind His aerial attacks are devastating and Megatron often lets Cyclonus loose on the enemy in the opening moments of a battle just to see how much damage he can inflict In helicopter mode, Cyclonus fires photon rockets and countless rounds of ammunition from twin mini-guns

INTELLIGENCE 7 | ENDURANCE 8
SPEED 9 SKILL 8 | STRENGTH 8
COURAGE 8 RANK 5 | FIREBLAST 7

Primary pulse cannon

Tank Mode

In secondary mode Megatron is a heavily armored, all-terrain attack tank His primary weapon in both modes is an ion displacement pulse cannon which can disintegrate matter at a molecular level and initiate explosive internal chain reactions Additionally, this terrifying robot is equipped with multiple power-link options, a missile launcher, a grabber claw, and a built-in Mini-Con prison cell

DEMOLISHOR

Though lacking in initiative and creative endeavor, Demolishor more than makes up for it in terms of his sheer, rolling destructive force and impenetrable armor plating. He's obedient and totally loyal, and rarely thinks about the odds when going into battle.

INTELLIGENCE 5	ENDURANCE 6
SPEED 6	SKILL 7
COURAGE 8	RANK 7

THRUST

A combat veteran, Thrust is a warhorse through and through. But his many successes on the battlefield have bred a deep-rooted arrogance that often blunts his effectiveness and riles his fellow Decepticon lieutenants. Thrust's (and Ambush's) ambition means he'll do anything to advance his own cause, often at the expense of others.

INTELLIGENCE 8	ENDURANCE
SPEED 10	SKILL 9
COURAGE 8	RANK 9

Tactical underwing sensor array

Missile storage ports

Wingblade power sword

Mini-Con flight pod

INTELLIGENCE 8	ENDURANCE 7
SPEED 10	SKILL 8
COURAGE 8	RANK

Starscream

Petty, self-serving, unreliable — the list of Starscream's faults is endless. It's not as well, he's a consummate professional in the air (otherwise Megatron would have dismembered him some time ago) — with his teeth. Starscream covets the Decepticon leadership, often openly, and stands poised to take charge should the means and opportunity present themselves. In airborne jet mode, he wields powerful, thermo-shock cannons.

TRANSFORMERS ARMADA

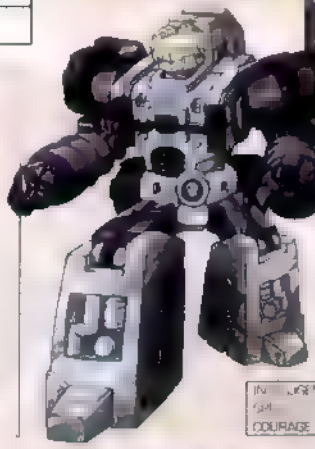
MINI-CONS

A LEAGUE OF THEIR OWN

THOUGH THEY ARE both transforming robots and inhabitants of Cybertron, the Mini-Cons are a unique race of beings. They choose to keep to themselves, aware of the potential for others to abuse their amazing powers. After the Decepticons declared war and began rounding up Mini-Cons for enforced servitude, many chose to fight with the Autobots. They see the Autobots in a positive light, but are still unable to fully trust them. Even on Earth, it took some Spark-searching before wary allegiances were finally formed.

LEADER-1

Leader-1 is highly intelligent and a testing adversary in his own right. He transforms into a mini-assault vehicle



LEADER-1: ROBOT MODE

Truth be told, there's a part of Leader-1 that relishes his new role as a "bad guy." Though enslaved and faced with the daunting task of power linking with Megatron himself, Leader-1 more than rises to the occasion. It's as if some dark, hidden aspect of his personality, one that even he never acknowledged, has been let loose

INTELLIGENCE 10	ENDURANCE 10
SPEED 10	STRENGTH 10
COURAGE 10	FIREBLAST 10

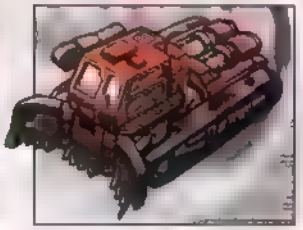
Power-linked to Megatron

ICEBERG

Some Mini-Cons just seem to gravitate together, normally in threes. These Mini-Con teams form autonomous units allied to the main anti-Decepticon war effort but allowed to operate largely independent agendas. Iceberg, along with Ransack and Dune Runner, is a part of the Adventure Team.

INTELLIGENCE 7	ENDURANCE 8
SPEED 10	SKILL 10
COURAGE 7	RANK 10

*Rating for combined Adventure Team



RANSACK

Always ready for action, Ransack forms the [illegible] all-terrain, all-weather specialist search-and-rescue unit, the Adventure Team. Ransack's specialty is working in wet and marshy conditions. His jeep mode, with its built-in hook/pulley, is ideal for offroad recovery

The Air Defense Team

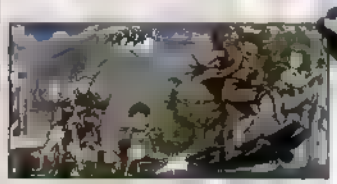
The Air Defense Team is one of the most powerful Mini-Con units. Individually, Jetstorm, Sonar, and Runway are very fast and carry a range of armaments. When combined to form the Star Saber (*see page 125*), they possess almost unlimited power. They tend to shun other Mini-Cons, and have spent so much time together that they often finish each others sentences.

INTELLIGENCE 5	ENDURANCE 7
SPEED 8	SKILL 7
COURAGE 6	RANK 5
	STRENGTH 6
	FIREBLAST 4

*Rating for combined Air Defense Team

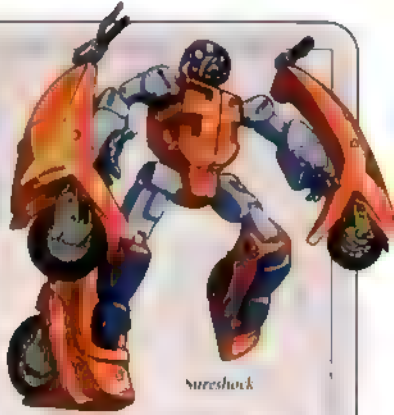
Street Action Team

Among the first Mini-Cons to interact directly with humankind, the Street Action Team—Grindor, High Wire, and Sureshock—are also the most naturally curious. The trio happily adapted their Cybertronian forms to blend in with the local vehicular traffic, eager to experience all the new planet had to offer. They combine to form a larger robot, Perceptor.



Grindor

High Wire

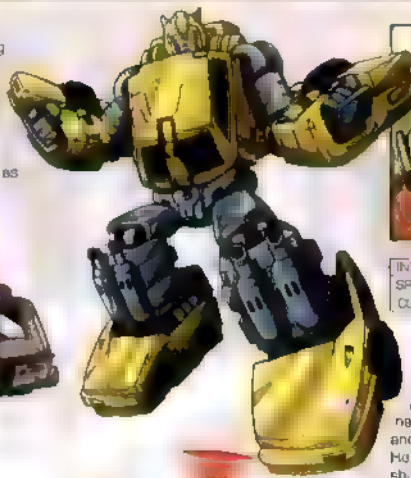


Sureshock

INTELLIGENCE 9 | ENDURANCE 8
SPEED [illegible] | SKILL [illegible]
COURAGE [illegible] | RANK [illegible]
Power-linked to [illegible] Street Action [illegible]

LONGARM

Though small, Longarm has surprising levels of strength in both robot mode and crane mode. His crane arm can lift 30 tons, and power linked to Red Alert—has enough traction and pull to down a TRANSFORMER. He can also use the crane arm as a bludgeoning weapon.



INTELLIGENCE 10 | ENDURANCE 9
SPEED 10 | SKILL 10 | STRENGTH 9
COURAGE 10 | RANK 10 | FIREBLAST 10
*Power-linked to Optimus Prime

INTELLIGENCE 10 | ENDURANCE 9
SPEED [illegible] | SKILL 9 | STRENGTH 8
COURAGE 10 | RANK [illegible] | FIREBLAST 8
*Power-linked to Red Alert

SPARKPLUG

One of the few Mini-Cons to embrace the alliance with the Autobots, Sparkplug lives up to his name with a brash, fiery personality and a sports car alternate mode. He powerlinks to Optimus Prime and shares Prime's ideals of freedom.

INTELLIGENCE [illegible] | ENDURANCE 6
SPEED [illegible] | SKILL 6 | STRENGTH 5
COURAGE [illegible] | RANK [illegible] | FIREBLAST 5
*Power-linked to [illegible] Sureshock

SWINDLE

Swindle is quite prepared to overcome a few pangs of remorse over his victims to come out on top. A daredevil risk-taker, he's well matched with Starscream, and when in racecar mode likes to live life on the edge.

JOLT

One of the most intrepid Mini-Cons, Jolt is prepared to go beyond the call of duty to get the job done. His helicopter mode grants him a high degree of maneuverability, and he fires circuit-disrupting taser bolts. Jolt power links to Hot Shot.

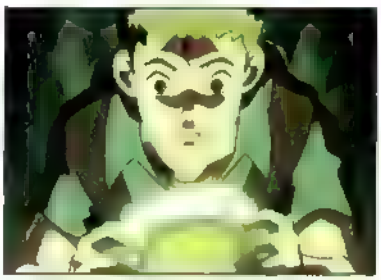
INTELLIGENCE 7 | ENDURANCE 8
SPEED 9 | SKILL 5 | STRENGTH 8
[illegible] | RANK 5 | FIREBLAST 4
*Power-linked to Hot Shot

TRANSFORMERS ARMADA

THE TV SERIES

SELECTED EPISODES FROM THE EPIC SAGA

CO-PRODUCED IN THE United States and Japan, the 52-episode TRANSFORMERS Armada TV series utilizes the distinctive Japanese anime style, using classic cel animation and CG elements. Set in the United States, the first 20 episodes set out the initial skirmishes in the new phase of the Autobot/Decepticon struggle and introduce the core Mini-Cons. With increasing momentum, the series moves into its final phase, dubbed "The Unicron Battles," and pits the TRANSFORMERS Armada Autobots and Decepticons against the ultimate villain—Unicron—laying the scene for the next incarnation. TRANSFORMERS Energon



"FIRST ENCOUNTER"

After discovering the remains of a crashed spacecraft in the cave, Scrapper kids Red Carlos and Alexis encounter a strange, but cute creature. Red, Alexis, Scrapper and Inspector Gadget (a Mini-Con) attempt to capture the creature, but it is rescued by Optimus Prime.

Galvatron

"METAMORPHOSIS"

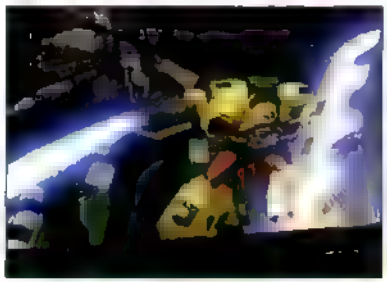
While Optimus Prime, Megatron and their forces battle, Red Carlos, Alexis and Scrapper take refuge in the cave. Back at the Mini-Con spacecraft, they activate two more Mini-Cons, Gizmo and Cyberback. Above ground, the Decepticons attempt to capture the Cybertronian spacecraft, but it is snatched to the moon to investigate. Mini-Con signal. Both factions [illegible] other Mini-Cons lie scattered on the planet.

"RUIN"

After receiving a holographic cry for help from a mysterious girl, the Autobots travel to the bottom of the sea in search of a lost Mini-Con. Attacked by the Decepticons, Prime (with Red, Carlos and Alexis in his cab) takes refuge in a ruined city. The holographic girl tells of three Mini-Cons who [illegible] sword [illegible] power. The Star Saber. Megatron [illegible] caught the city walls, [illegible] with the [illegible] sword.

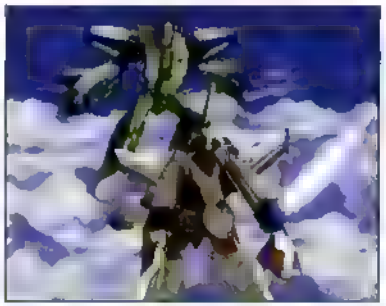
"DECISIVE BATTLE"

Armed with the [illegible] Star Saber and protected by the Skyboom Shield, Megatron challenges Optimus Prime to a [illegible] battle. Prime agrees, and the two begin. During the battle, Prime's [illegible] Megatron's arm, but the Skyboom Shield and [illegible] Meanwhile, the Decepticons are keeping the Autobots busy, but the Autobots overpower Sideways, Jetstorm, Shotgun, Viper and Dirge. Prime knocks the Skyboom Shield out of his grasp and it responds by protecting Prime. The flash of shield and Star Saber sends a signal out into space.



"CHASE"

When Decepticon Sideways uses a virus to hack into the Autobots' mainframe computer, Red Carlos, Alexis and the Scrapper Autobot [illegible] Sky Burn. But their attempt to [illegible] the [illegible] results in an explosion that sends them all to Cybertronspace, where they are attacked [illegible] by Sideways. As the [illegible] through the [illegible] wormholes, Alexis witnesses a [illegible] Cybertronian [illegible] spaceship [illegible] which pursues them.

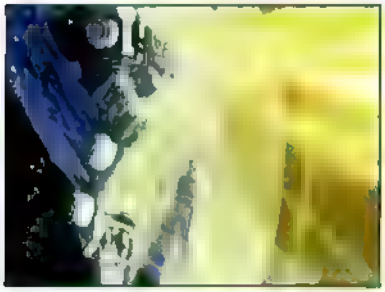


"AWAKENING"

Alexis and Red Alert [illegible] three new Mini-Con [illegible]. One appears to be [illegible] under the [illegible] Red Carlos and the Scrapper Autobot Trailbreaker [illegible] Sideways [illegible] his own [illegible] Alexis [illegible] the [illegible] of Mini-Cons [illegible] the Reunion Blaster [illegible] weapon [illegible] power. Beast Autobase [illegible] the [illegible] and the Scrapper Autobot [illegible] one of the [illegible] parts, Sky Burn.

"SACRIFICE"

In order to steal the Requiem Blaster [illegible] powerful combined form of the Space Team), the [illegible] with the Star Saber, [illegible] a battle with the Autobots in the jungle. Prime has [illegible] the Space Team [illegible] as a weapon, and Autobase [illegible] by Scrapper and Megatron [illegible]. Autobase and [illegible] are killed by [illegible] the Space Team. Outgunned with his new weapon, Megatron [illegible]



"CRISIS"

Armed with three Mini-Con weapons—the Star Saber, the Skyboom shield, and the Requiem Blaster—Megatron plans to return to Cybertron. As a parting shot, he targets Earth with his awesome Hydra Cannon. Prime and the Autobots fail to prevent Thrust from firing the Hydra Cannon. To save Earth, Prime uses the power of the Matrix to nullify the blast, but his body is destroyed in the process.

"MIRACLE"

The Autobots, with Hot Shot in command, complete work on their own spacecraft and lift off from Earth (with the kids and Mini-Cons). Megatron, aware of their pursuit, turns his ship around, ready to fight. The Autobots notice countless Mini-Cons gathering nearby, but before they can investigate the phenomenon, Megatron attacks. The battle is brutal. Megatron intent on wiping out the Autobots once and for all. Hot Shot challenges Megatron directly, but lacks the power to finish the job. The Mini-Cons interact with the Matrix to bring back Prime.

"UPRISING"

On Cybertron, Galvatron (formerly Megatron) steps up his campaign to conquer the planet. Optimus Prime and the Autobots also return, aware that an even greater threat is looming that of Unicron. The Autobots are ambushed by the Decepticons and battle commences. But when a mysterious force field surrounds Cybertron, Prime attempts to get Galvatron to join forces against Unicron. Mini-Cons from across the galaxy gather, ready to do battle.

"DRIFT"

Thrust reveals his allegiance to Unicron and disappears into tunnels deep within Cybertron, taking the Requiem Blaster and Skyboom shield with him. Rad starts to think that he met High Wire before his revival on Earth, and as they journey within Cybertron they find themselves slipping back in time, to the creation of the Mini-Cons. Rad and the others realize that the Mini-Cons are the component cells of Unicron himself.

"CLAMP"

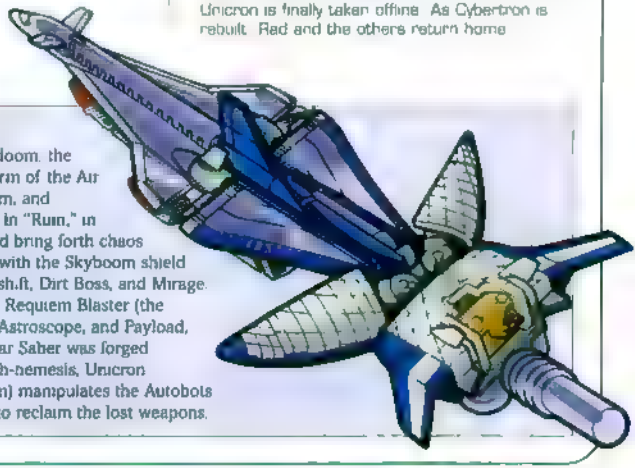
In an attempt to arrange a truce, Prime agrees to meet with Galvatron. But Galvatron sees the opportunity to take the Autobots by surprise, blasting them remorselessly. Convinced now of the threat posed by Unicron, Starscream battles Galvatron, but is critically wounded by the Star Saber. Unicron, meanwhile, starts to awaken. Finally convinced that the threat is real, Galvatron offers the Star Saber to Prime, but it is stolen by Sideways.

"UNION"/"ORIGIN"

Galvatron destroys the traitorous Thrust, and the Autobots and Decepticons unite against Unicron. Unable at first to hurt or damage the planet-sized being, the combined armada manages to find a weak point: Unicron's neck. Optimus Prime and Galvatron (along with High Wire, Grindor and Sureshock) take the fight inside Unicron itself. But Unicron has been waiting for just this moment, and offers Prime the chance to merge with him. Defiant to the end, Prime refuses, and his heroics and the efforts of Rad and High Wire rouse the dormant Mini-Cons, who turn on their creator, sucking the life out of Unicron.

"MORTAL COMBAT"

Believing Unicron destroyed, Galvatron renews his attack on Optimus Prime, the truce forgotten. But Galvatron's evil intentions start to bring Unicron back to life again. The Autobots and Decepticons prepare their attack. The kids and Mini-Cons are evacuated, leaving Prime and Galvatron to battle it out. But as Unicron begins to stir, Galvatron is sucked into a black hole and Unicron is finally taken offline. As Cybertron is rebuilt, Rad and the others return home.



The Star Saber

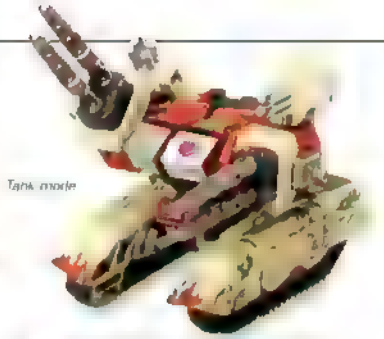
One of three instruments of doom, the Star Saber is the combined form of the Air Defense Team (Sonar, Jetstorm, and Runway). It is first mentioned in "Ruin," in which its power to destroy and bring forth chaos is made brutally plain. Along with the Skyboom shield (the combined form of Downshift, Dirt Boss, and Mirage, a.k.a. the Race Team) and the Requiem Blaster (the combined form of Sky Blast, Astroscope, and Payload, a.k.a. the Space Team), the Star Saber was forged by the TRANSFORMERS' arch-nemesis, Unicron. Sideways (an agent of Unicron) manipulates the Autobots and Decepticons in an effort to reclaim the lost weapons.

TRANSFORMERS

ARMADA TOYS

"POWERLINX—ACTIVATE"

WHEN THE TRANSFORMERS Armada toyline was previewed, many fans believed the Mini-Cons were reworkings of the small G1 toys called Micromasters. But the extra play value of the new line soon became apparent. Not only did the Mini-Cons transform, but their vehicle-mode forms could connect to "powerlinx" points on the larger toys to activate hidden features. In addition, some Mini-Con teams combined to form larger robots or weapons. Rather than simply appealing to long-term fans, the toyline brought in a new, younger audience with its entry-level storyline and character specs.



Tank mode

Robot mode

Demolishor

TRANSFORMER Demolishor interacts with Mini-Con Blackout in many different ways and has extra features in all three modes: robot, base and assault tank/vehicle. In vehicle mode, Blackout can sit in a flip-up driver's seat and add his own weaponry to Demolishor's 14 points of potential firepower. In both base and robot mode, powerlinx points allow for extra weaponry.

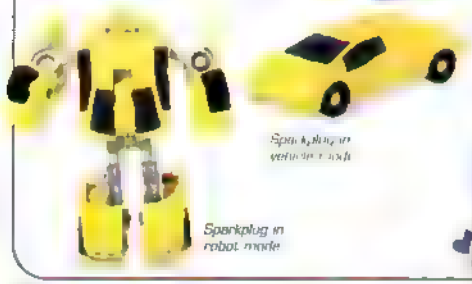
Blackout in vehicle mode

Optimus Prime

This amazing toy is really three or four toys in one. It comes with a trailer that auto-transforms into base mode when activated by a signal transmitter in the cab section and features several powerlinx points for Mini-Con Sparkplug. There is also a secondary robot form. In base mode the trailer section can be connected to the cab section to form the giant-sized Super Optimus Prime.

Super Optimus Prime

Optimus in vehicle mode with trailer



Sparkplug in vehicle mode

Sparkplug in robot mode

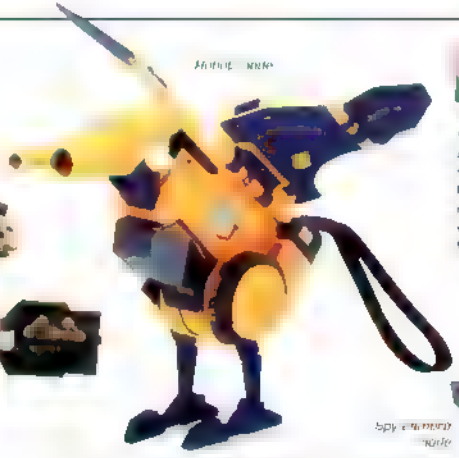
Thrust

Modeled on an F-35 jet, Thrust is armed with pressure missile launchers, launched by the powerlinx point on Mini-Con companion Inferno. Due to safety regulations, Thrust's missiles are mounted on his legs rather than his arms. Thrust also has a third attack mode, which is a slight variation on his jet configuration.

Robot mode

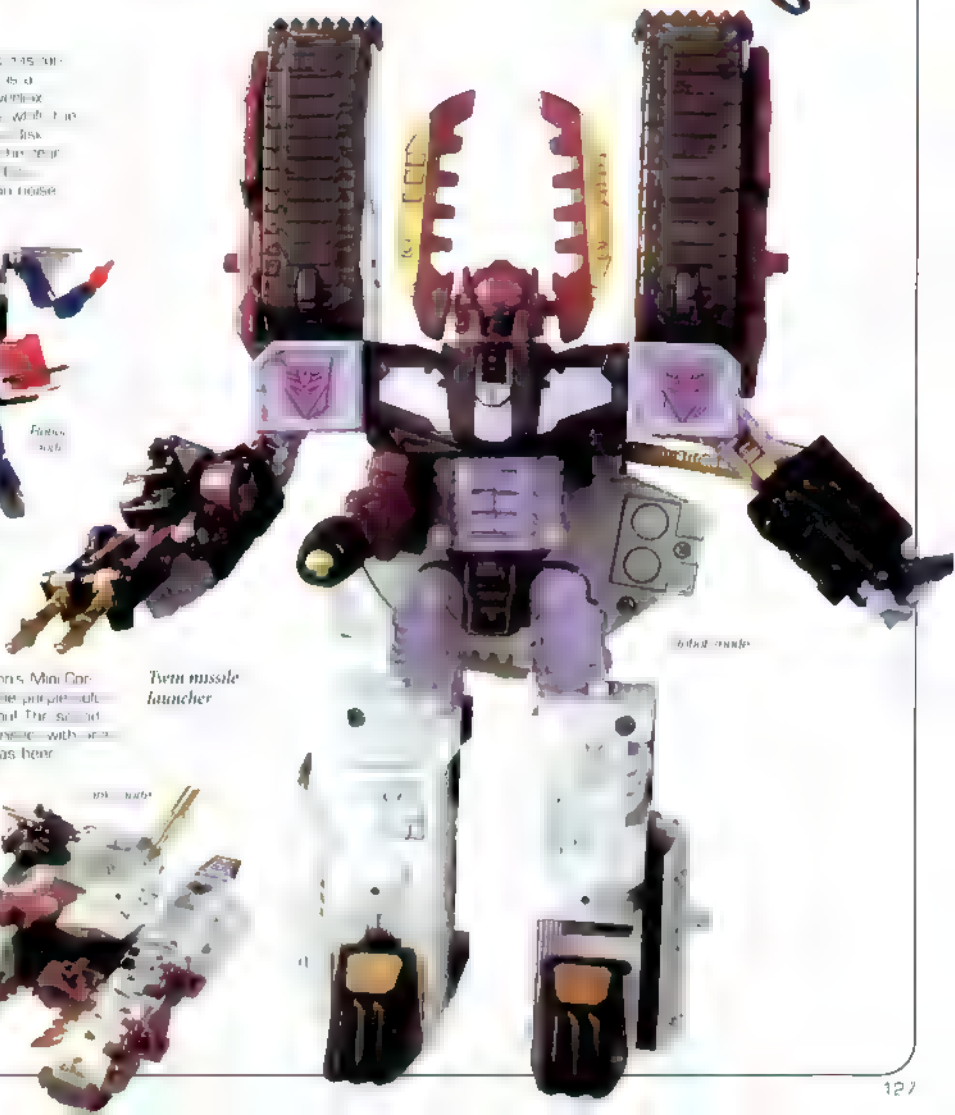
Jet mode

Rear powerbux point



Laserbeak

Red Alert



Galvatron

Twin missile launcher

Clench power linked to Galvatron

TRANSFORMERS

ENERGON

EXPANDING THE ARMADA-VERSE

TRANSFORMERS ENERGON IS set some 10 years after the end of TRANSFORMERS Armada Core characters such as Optimus Prime, Hot Shot, Megatron, and Starscream return, along with a cast of new Autobots, Decepticons, Terrorcons, Mini-Cons, and Omnicons! At the end of TRANSFORMERS Armada, Unicron is all but destroyed, a lifeless shell adrift in space. Now the chaos-bringer returns, but still cannot muster a direct attack on Cybertron or Earth To rebuild and reenergize, Unicron needs vast quantities of the TRANSFORMER fuel known as energon. In this generation, energon is a naturally occurring substance, and Earth is a rich source

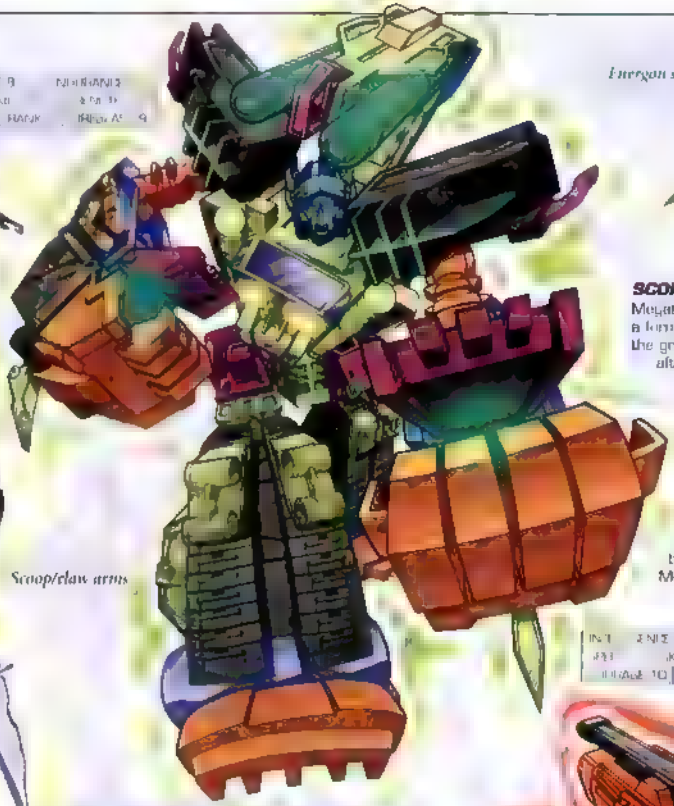
The Return of Unicron

In Energon's opening cut and thrust, Unicron is the focus of all attention as he undertakes to engineer his own resurrection Through his manipulative and conniving go-between, Alpha Quintesson, Unicron recruits a number of embittered former Decepticons (among them Scorponok, Battle Ravage, Cruellock, and Divebomb) In return for their solemn pledge to gather vast quantities of energon on his behalf, Unicron grants them ethal new Hyper-modes, renaming them Terrorcons

Megatron

His physical body utterly destroyed in Armada s final battle Megatron s Spark has been absorbed into Unicron s own Spark Core Having spent 10 years in the heart of darkness, he will do anything to get out even if it means striking a deal with his greatest enemy Optimus Prime While Unicron s not looking, Megatron uses his expanded cosmic cognizance to create a new body complete with energon weapons and triple-changing capabilities

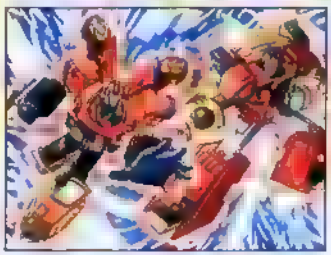
Scoop/claw arms



Energon stinger

SCORPONOK

Megatron's new rival in villainy is Scorponok a former Decepticon who is unwilling to accept the grudging peace that emerged in the aftermath of the Unicron Battles. Recreated in Hypermode reconfiguration within Unicron, Scorponok emerged to lead the Terrorcon assault on Earth. He is equipped with three alternate modes: a scorpion battle configuration with energon stinger, a powerful jet, and a monstrous construction vehicle. Scorponok eschews Megatron's roundabout subterfuge approach, preferring direct brutal action and swift results, but Megatron, in self, would have the final word.



The Spark of Combination

To aid in the fight against Unicron, the all-seeing, all-knowing intelligence at the heart of Cybertron grants Optimus Prime and a trusted crew of Autobot warriors the Spark of Combination. The Spark unlocks amazing multi-upon-multi combination/team-up abilities.

Optimus combined right leg configuration

OPTIMUS PRIME

The Autobots believed the war was finally over. Optimus Prime remained wary, certain that one day evil would return. He advised the Autobot High Council actively seeking out the whereabouts and status of Unicron. In this endeavor, Prime was assisted by a peacekeeping robot Cybertron's internal mainframe

SUPER OPTIMUS PRIME

In his fight against the tyranny of Unicron and the Terrorcons, Optimus Prime is now augmented by a personal team of Autobots: OP 1 (fire truck), OP 2 (helicopter), OP 3 (jet), and OP 4 (sub) maintain a direct mental link with the Autobot leader either operating as sole agents or initializing the Spark of Combination to create an amazing fourway linkage and the ultimate Autobot warrior.

AUTOBOTS

AN AUTOBOT EVOLUTION

ENERGON SEES THE return of many familiar faces in different configurations alongside new Autobot recruits and a new race known as Omnicons. In the 10 years following the destruction of Unicron, peace settles on Cybertron. Cyber-City is rebuilt, the leaderless Decepticons are grudgingly reabsorbed into Cybertronian society, and the Mini-Cons return to their designated sectors, no longer bound to either Autobots or Decepticons. The former Autobot Peacekeeping Assembly is reestablished and the Autobot High Council returns from exile. But there are those who keep a wary optic sensor on the long-range scanners.

A Fragile Peace

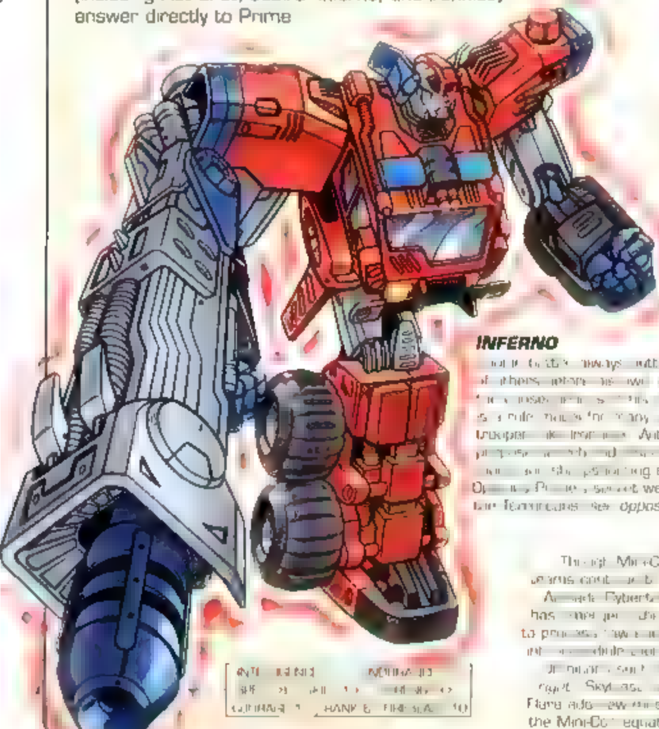
Even in peacetime, Optimus Prime prepares a trusted inner circle of warriors for war. Though officially a part of the Autobot Peacekeeping Assembly rank and file, under the jurisdiction of the High Council, these carefully selected warriors (including Hot Shot, Jetfire, Inferno, and Ironhide) answer directly to Prime.

INTELLIGENCE 8 | ENDURANCE 8
SPEED 10 | SKILL 9 | STRENGTH 7
COURAGE 9 | RANK 8 | FIREBLAST 7

HOT SHOT

The [illegible] on Earth and against Unicron [illegible] and tempered Hot Shot, revealing a skilled warrior with true leadership [illegible]. In his upgraded [illegible] faster than ever and can combine with fellow Autobot Inferno thanks to the Spark of Combination.

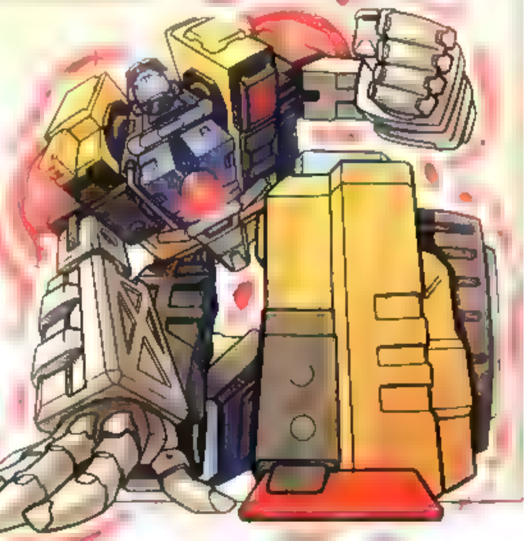
[illegible] | [illegible]
[illegible]
COURAGE [illegible] | RANK 8 | FIREBLAST 7



INFERNO

[illegible] always putting the safety of others [illegible] [illegible] Anth [illegible] [illegible] skills [illegible] Optimus Prime's secret weapon against the Terrorcons (see opposite page).

INTELLIGENCE [illegible] | ENDURANCE [illegible]
SPEED [illegible] | SKILL [illegible] | STRENGTH [illegible]
COURAGE [illegible] | RANK 6 | FIREBLAST 10



OMNICONS

Though Mini-Cons [illegible] Mini-Con [illegible] operate [illegible] Armada [illegible] Cybertron [illegible] new [illegible] has [illegible] the Omnicons [illegible] to process [illegible] and [illegible] into [illegible] weapons [illegible] Skyblast [illegible] Signal Flare add [illegible] the Mini-Con equation.

TRANSFORMERS ENERGON

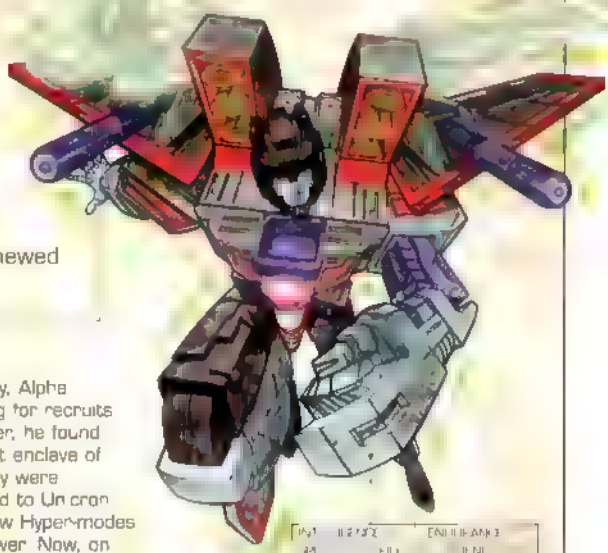
DECEPTICONS

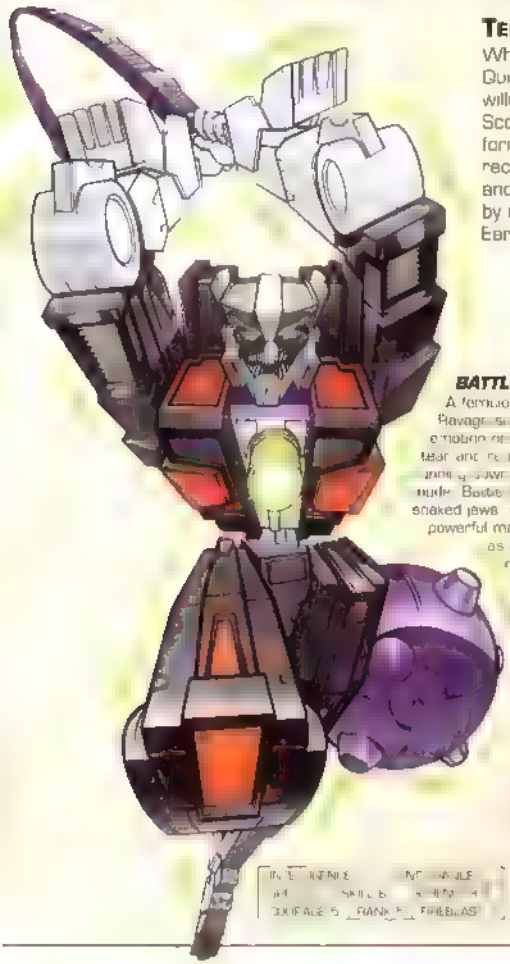
A DECEPTICON REVOLUTION

STARSCREAM

Left for dead by Scorponok and his Terrorcons Megatron's former lieutenant Starscream is reborn as the strangest TRANSFORMER of all. Bonded with pure [illegible] at a molecular level, he can take on a phantom [illegible] More determined than ever [illegible] power.

WHILE SOME DECEPTICONS found reintegration into Cybertronian society less of an ordeal than they had imagined, for others it was the bitterest of pills to swallow. The Autobots' open-armed and nonjudgmental approach to the survivors of the Unicron Battles only rubbed rust in the wounds. Unsurprisingly, a core group of malcontents plotted in secret, while appearing to acquiesce to the new regime. Few in number, and without enough energon to fuel a renewed uprising, they could do little except bide their time.





TERRORCONS

When Unicron's emissary, Alpha Quintesson, came looking for recruits willing to serve his master, he found Scorponok and his secret enclave of former Decepticons. They were recruited and transported to Unicron and granted terrifying new Hypermodes by its remaining dark power. Now, on Earth, they wreak havoc in its name.

BATTLE RAVAGE

A ferocious force of nature, Battle Ravage simply has no [illegible] for emotion or mercy. He exists to blindly tear and rend all [illegible] destroy indiscriminately using his vicious, [illegible] jaws, razor-edged claws and powerful mace tail (which can double as a handheld weapon). A robot made to terminate all who stand in his way. He never gives up. Never.

Vise grip attachment

DIVEBOMB

Silent and stealthy, Divebomb combines [illegible] skills in robot mode with aerial "bird-of-prey" [illegible] and fury in hawk mode to devastating effect. In either mode, he's lethal with energon blades and tools for close range fighting. His feathers cut through any known metal. Very rarely remaining on the ground, Divebomb uses leg turbines to hover in robot mode.

TRANSFORMERS

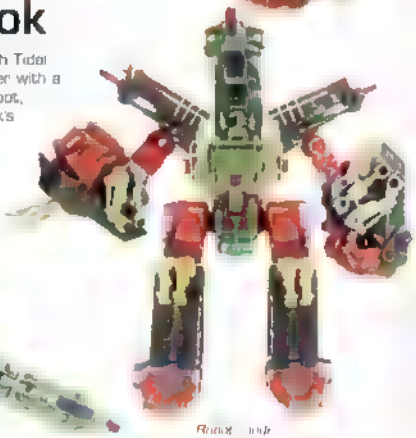
ENERGON TOYS

A WINNING COMBINATION

THE LATTER WAVE of pre-Energon Armada toys finally gave collectors the one item they'd always wanted—a transforming Unicron figure. Various Takara prototypes had been developed, but it took the greater sophistication of engineering techniques that came with Armada to make it possible. Unveiled to great acclaim as an Armada toy, Unicron crossed over into the Energon line alongside an expanded and upgraded roster of Autobots, Decepticons, Mini-Cons, Terrorcons, and Omnicons. Multiple modes and an amazing interchangeable transformation/combination facility for the Autobot characters turned Energon toys into a bona fide hit in their own right.

Scorponok

One of the "Ultra" figures along with Tidal Wave, Scorponok is a Triple Changer with a fourth "Hyper" mode. As well as robot, scorpion and jet modes, Scorponok's lower half can [illegible] function as a construction vehicle. The toy has [illegible] that launch from the claws and a hidden stash of missiles.



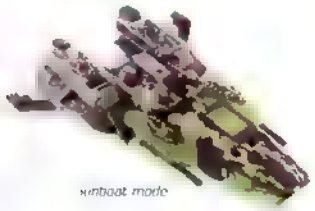
Super Optimus Prime

Optimus Prime

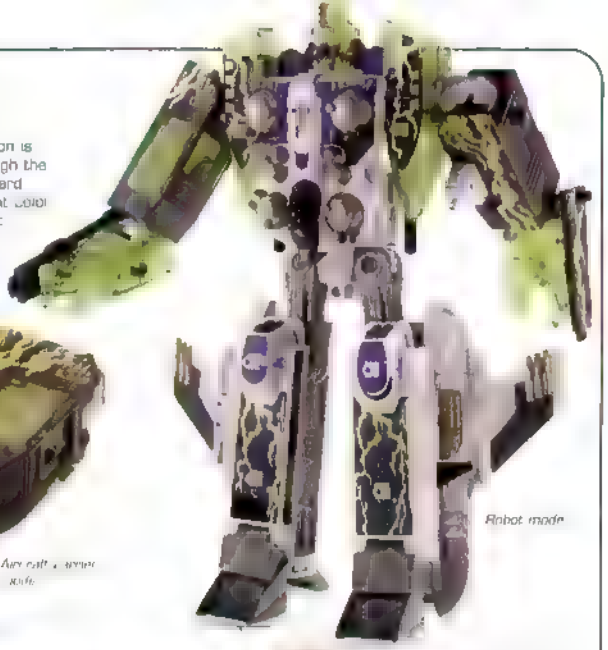
As with the Armada version, the Prime toy comes with a Super Optimus Prime [illegible]. But in this case, the main figure comes with its own personal squad of four ancillary vehicles (OP-1 to OP-4: a sub, a helicopter, a drill, and a fire engine). The four drones can be carried in trailer mode and launched from base mode. The cab/chest windows open to reveal Prime's Matrix compartment, and the figure has a variety of sound effects, plus one for each drone.

Tidal Wave

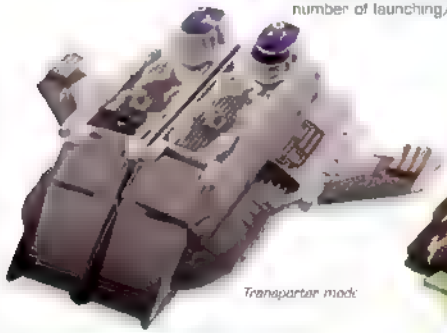
Another toy to roll on from Armada into Energon is Tidal Wave. The mold is virtually identical, though the rear/leg wings point backward instead of forward. But Energon Tidal Wave has a radically different color scheme and markings, with seven Unicron energon-empowered armies. Once again, Tidal Wave is his own dark fleet, with three seagoing alternate modes and an impressive number of launching/pivoting missile towers.



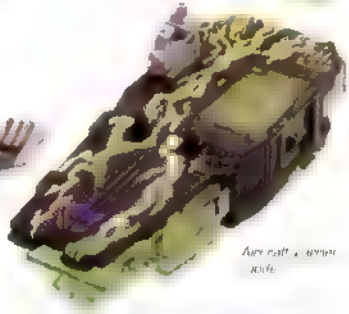
Jetboat mode



Robot mode



Transporter mode



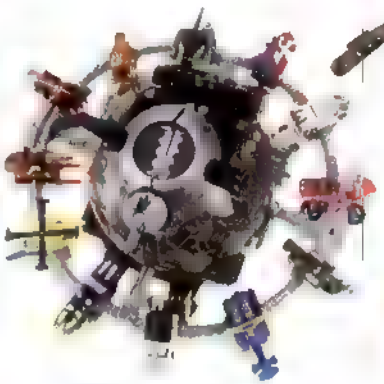
Aircraft carrier mode

Unicron

Approximately 16 in. (41 cm) tall in robot mode, Unicron is one of the biggest toys in the entire TRANSFORMERS range. In planet mode, Unicron can accommodate 24 Mini-Cons in his outer ring. With leg and chest projectiles, lights in heads and eyes, and traps and hiding places for Mini-Cons, this Unicron toy proves that the long wait was worth it. The Energon upgrade sports damaged arms in armor's green following the Unicron Battles in Armada.

Planet mode

Robot mode



Planet mode with full Mini-Con complement

Hotshot

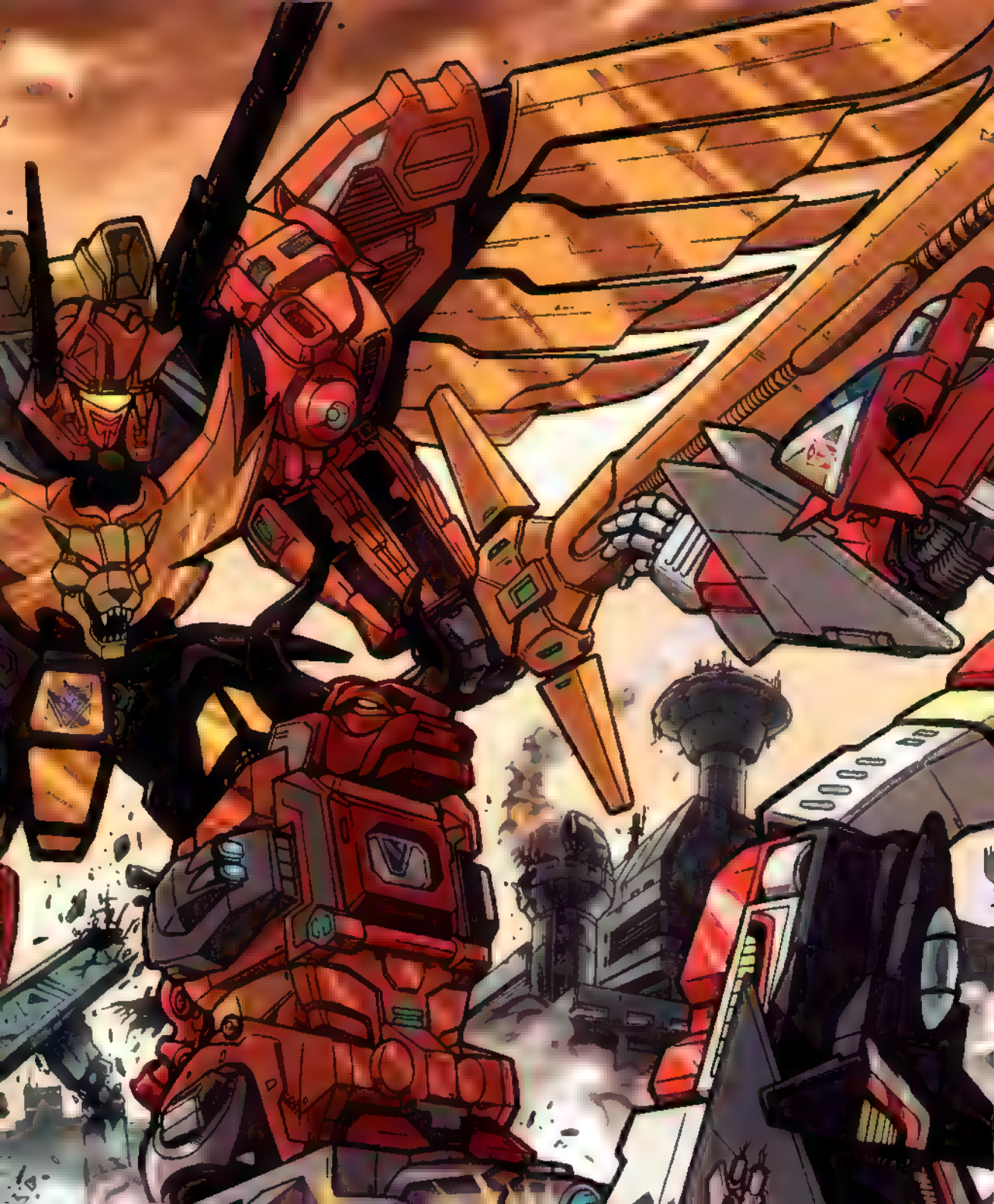
Sporting a redesign that retains elements of his Armada version, Hot Shot is back. His vehicle mode is more detailed, and the hood lifts to reveal engine detail within. In robot mode Hot Shot sports a Spark Crystal on his chest—the first to be seen since the Beast Machines era—and combines with Inferno to form a larger robot.

Robot mode

Vehicle mode

DREAMWAVE & IDW

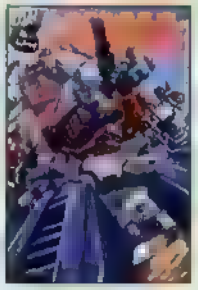
FOLLOWING THE DEMISE of Marvel's Generation 2 comic in 1994, the only TRANSFORMERS comic books to appear were convention exclusives published by BotCon and 3H Enterprises. That all changed in early 2002, when Dreamwave Productions secured the comics license from Hasbro. Starting out with a Generation 1 mini-series and an ongoing series based on the (then) current Armada toy line, they went on to publish several titles such as *The War Within*, *Energon*, and *Micromasters*. Then, in 2005, the TRANSFORMERS comics license passed to IDW Publishing, who opted to start fresh with their own updated and reimagined version of Generation 1.



GENERATION 1

RIDING THE RETRO WAVE

G1 ISSUE #1
The first issue of *Transformers: Prime Directive* [illegible] six variant covers. Autobot, Decepticon, retailer-incentive, hologram, second and third printings



DREAMWAVE'S NEW GENERATION 1 comic could hardly have had a better start. Issue #1 of the six-issue story arc, dubbed *Prime Directive* became the top-selling comic for April 2002, ahead of regular bestsellers such as *X-Men*, *Spider-Man*, and *Batman*. The launch rode the crest of a wave of renewed interest in the 1980s. Pat Lee's breathtaking "widescreen" artwork, previewed ahead of the launch, was a huge draw. A confirmed fan of the G1 toys and original comic series, Lee brought to the title visual flair and attention to detail, satisfying the different demands of both TRANSFORMERS fans and comic fans. On the back of *Prime Directive*'s success, Dreamwave launched their revisionary TRANSFORMERS universe.

THE FIRST SERIES

Prime Directive was written by Chris Serracini, whose previous credits included *Fate of the Blade* and *Darkminds*, both for Dreamwave. The story picks up after the launch and subsequent crash of the Ark II spacecraft. Spike Witwicky uncovers a covert military operation gone terribly wrong, one designed to control the TRANSFORMERS and use them as mindless machines of war. Freed from human control, Megatron unleashes a nanovirus, which will turn the Earth into a wholly metal world, and it's up to Optimus Prime and the Autobots to stop him.

Megatron, by Pat Lee

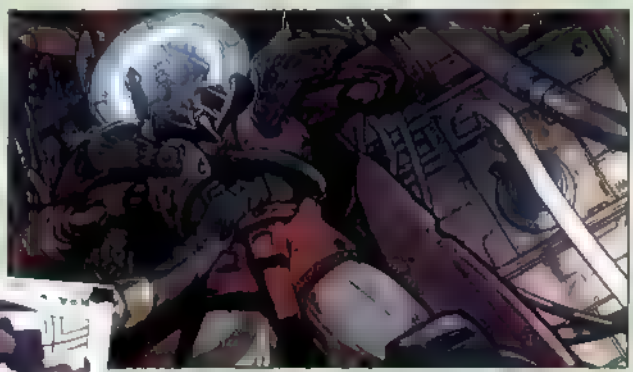
LAZARUS
Introduced in the prelaunch G1 Preview comic, Lazarus is both a character and the code name of the military project devised by him to autopilot the offline TRANSFORMERS. Lazarus abandons the project, taking with him the research and the most powerful captive Autobots and Decepticons. His [illegible] aim is to auction off these war machines to the highest bidder.

War and Peace

The second six-issue series was written by Brad Mick. Entitled *War and Peace*, it pulled in much more G1 continuity. The action takes place on Cybertron, now ruled by Shockwave. Uniting all under the Cybertronian banner, Shockwave has ended the civil war, and now seeks to gather in the rogue Earthbound Autobots and Decepticons. Some resist, and it falls to Optimus Prime (aided and abetted by Grimlock) to uncover the terrifying truth at the heart of Shockwave's world domination. Featuring Ultra Magnus, Omega Supreme, and the Sharkticons, the series heralded the start of the ongoing G1 series.

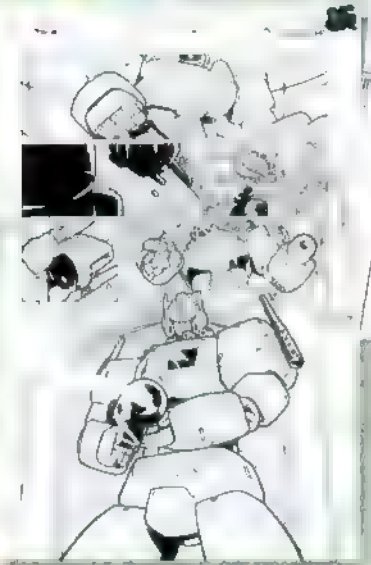
DINO-MIGHT!

Having sided with the Decepticons in the first G1 series, Grimlock chooses a more independent allegiance. *War and Peace* #4 reactivates his fellow Dinobots and returns to Cybertron to confront his old adversary, Shockwave.



ALPHA TRION

Making his first-ever comic book appearance, Alpha Trion (*see pages 36-37*) is revealed as Shockwave's helpless captive in *War and Peace*. The physical embodiment of Cybertron's Vector Sigma computer, Alpha Trion is Shockwave's ticket to omnipotence. Via the Matrix, the ultra-logical (but nevertheless deranged) Shockwave intends to access the Vector Sigma mainframe and bend Cybertron itself to his will.



FROM PENCIL TO INK

Pat Lee's pencils are part-rendered in ink by Rob Armstrong, leaving much of the background detail open for computer rendering and effects.

COLOR ART

Foreground tone and solid colors are added before the application of computer color and backgrounds.

Pat Lee

War and Peace featured an inner "white Prime" mode of Ultra Magnus (*right*), first realized by Pat Lee. The president and co-founder (with his brother, Roger) of Dreamwave Productions, Lee first came to prominence drawing *Bloodpool* for Rob Liefeld's Extreme Studios. Initially operating under the Image Comics banner, Lee's own imprint, Dreamwave, went solo with the launch of the first G1 series.

THE WAR WITHIN

THE CIVIL WAR YEARS

THE TRANSFORMERS SAGA takes place over some 9 million years, a vast time scale of which readers and viewers have seen only the tiniest fragment. So it stood to reason that there were many stories still to tell. Little or nothing was known of the Cybertronian civil war, of the battles won and lost on Cybertron before the TRANSFORMERS came to Earth, of this period's triumphs and tragedies. When Dreamwave President Pat Lee brought Simon Furman (writer of classic Marvel G1 and G2 series) onboard, the result was *The War Within*, a six-issue miniseries that sought to question all the collective suppositions about Cybertron, the civil war, Optimus Prime, and Megatron, and in doing so reveal the secret history of the TRANSFORMERS.

Don Figueroa's depiction of Starscream appeared in the preview book of The War Within.

ISSUE #1

The War Within debuted in October 2002 with a wraparound cover by Don Figueroa. A special, limited-edition lenticular variant followed.

VOLUME 1: THE WAR WITHIN

The initial story arc of *The War Within* focuses on Optimus Prime and Megatron, as the two leaders clash for the first time. It's the early stages of the civil war, and following the death of Sentinel Prime, a lowly records clerk called Optronix steps up to take the Matrix and the mantle of leadership. But rather than fight on, the newly dubbed Optimus Prime orders a mass evacuation, deciding that Cybertron is not worth fighting for. The cost, in terms of lost lives, is too high. However, Prime discovers that Megatron's plans are more far-reaching than he imagined, and that Cybertron is key to the destiny of many worlds.

RETRO-DESIGNS

The task of retro-designing the G1 TRANSFORMERS in their pre-Earth Cybertronian modes fell to newcomer Don Figueroa. He reworked a host of characters, such as Megatron and Starscream (*above*), his fully transformable designs evoking each robot's later Earth iteration.

Volume 2: The Dark Ages

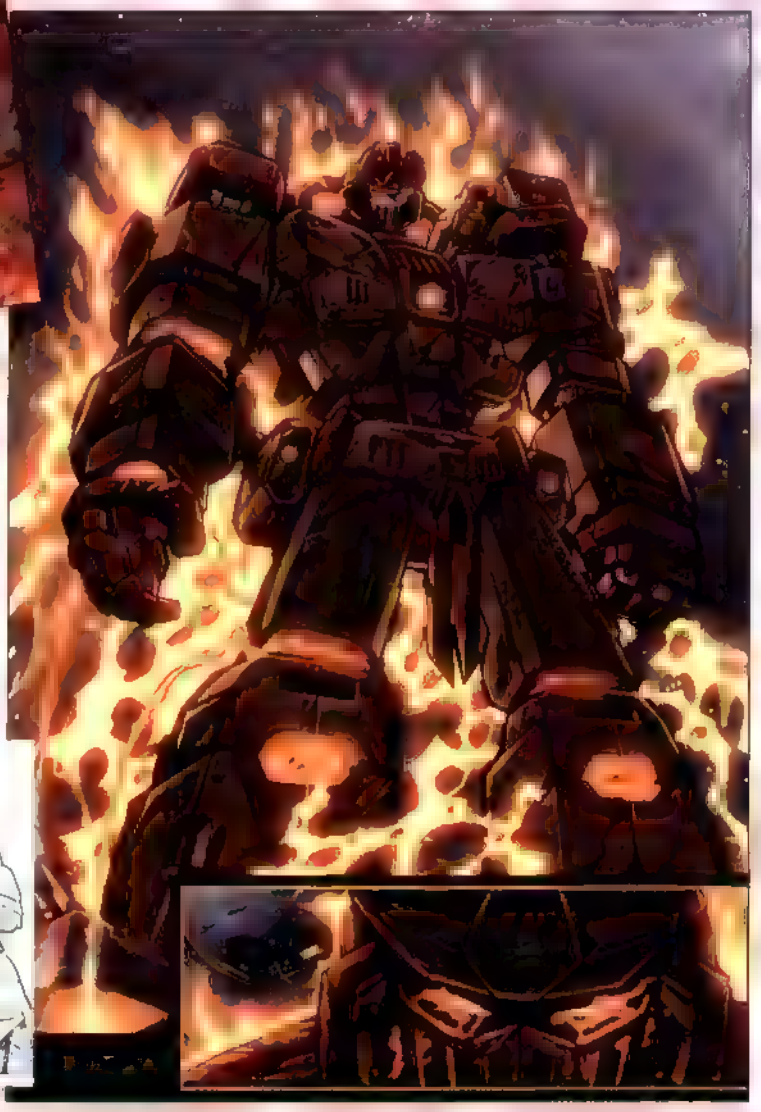
In the second volume of *The War Within* Optimus Prime and Megatron are lost, presumed dead when a prototype Space Bridge explodes. The civil war descends into a turf war between various factions (Autobots, Decepticons, Predacons, Wreckers, and so on). Into this dark cauldron of a world comes The Fallen. One of the original 13 TRANSFORMERS, The Fallen's machinations crank the chaos up to fever pitch, as Grimlock, Shockwave, Jetfire, Springer, and others attempt to identify and neutralize the threat he poses to all creation.

BLUDGEON & CO

Foreshadowing his evolution to master of the Dark Energon and opponent of the Forbidden martial art of Metallikato, pre-Pretender Bludgeon agrees to serve The Fallen, as do fellow acolytes Mindwipe and Bugly.

ANDREW WILDMAN

With Don Figueroa busy on the new ongoing *Generation 1* series, Furman was reunited on *The Dark Ages* with artist Andrew Wildman, who had drawn the first 12 issues of the Marvel *Transformers* series and key stories in the *Transformers UK* run. Figueroa provided cover designs for new Wildman-drawn covers for the six-issue series.



PENCIL DRAWING

Andrew Wildman's pencil artwork (*left*) for page 5 of *The Dark Ages* issue #1 is based on Pat Lee's original design for The Fallen.

FROM INK TO COLOR

Erik Sander's ink work (*right*) was turned into a final colored page by Rob Ruffolo (*far right*). The text was added later.

TRANSFORMERS

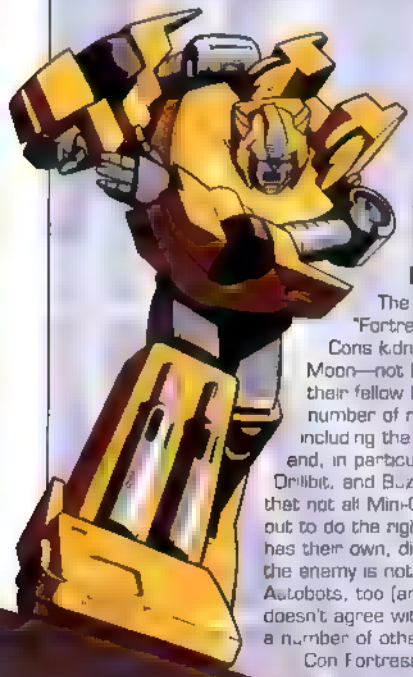
ARMADA & ENERGON

THE SAME BUT DIFFERENT

ALONGSIDE THE INITIAL Generation 1 miniseries, Dreamwave launched an ongoing TRANSFORMERS Armada comic. In the same way that the toyline and TV series provided an easy entry level for kids new to the TRANSFORMERS concept, so the comic sought to draw in new, younger readers without alienating the established fans. The first five issues provide a much-expanded setup for the whole saga, with the first two issues set entirely on Cybertron, mere glimpses of which were afforded to viewers of the TV series. The other notable difference was that while in the TV show, the Mini-Cons spoke only in bleeps and whistles, in the comic they had full English-language speech bubble facility. Initial scriptwriter Chris Serracini and subsequent scribe Simon Furman were grateful for this variation. The series ran for 18 issues, the focus of the story expanding to include alternate timelines, concluding in an all-out battle against Unicron. At issue #19, the comic's title changed to *TRANSFORMERS Energon* directly continuing the saga.

ISSUE #1

Featuring a wraparound cover by artist James Raiz, *TRANSFORMERS Armada* #1 hit the stands in July 2002. The holofoil variant (right) is by Don Figueroa.



Mini-Con Sparkplug lashes out in TRANSFORMERS Armada issue #8 (art by Guido Guidi)

FORTRESS

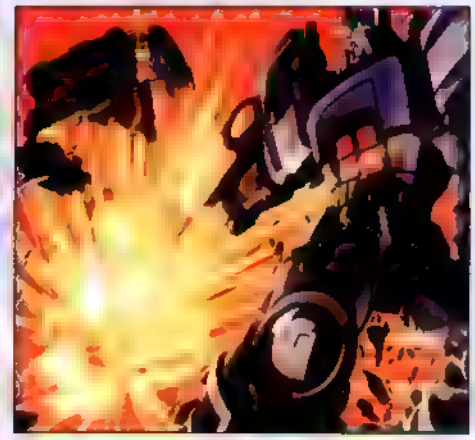
The second major story arc, called "Fortress," saw the recently arrived Mini-Cons kidnapped and taken away to Earth's Moon—not by the Decepticons, but rather by their fellow Mini-Cons. The story introduces a number of new Mini-Cons and Mini-Con teams including the Space Team, the Adventure Team and, in particular, the Destruction Team—Dualor, Drillbit, and Buzzsaw. For the first time, we realize that not all Mini-Cons are necessarily good guys out to do the right thing. The Destruction Team has their own, distinct world view, one in which the enemy is not just the Decepticons, but the Autobots, too (and, for that matter, anyone who doesn't agree with them.) Sparkplug, Mirage, and a number of other Mini-Cons rebel, and the Mini-Con Fortress on the Moon is destroyed.

THE MINI-CON MATRIX

Kicking off the epic "Worlds Collide" storyline, the Mini-Con Over-Run travels across dimensional space in search of Optimus Prime. The greatest Mini-Con comes from a Cybertron consumed utterly by Unicron. Over-Run brings with him the Mini-Con Matrix (*above*), which houses the combined Sparks of all of his world's surviving Mini-Cons.

FAMILIAR FACES

Plucked from a variety of alternate Cybertrons and timelines, Unicron's five heralds are almost, but not quite, characters we've met before. Though not named, they are versions of G1 Decepticons Furman had used in the original Marvel series. Artists Don Figueroa and Guido Guidi made subtle changes to each, making them distinct from the core G1 characters.



THE UNICRON BATTLES

Despite the efforts of Optimus Prime and Jetfire, Unicron enters the TRANSFORMERS Armada Universe. But where does it meet its concerted attack from Autobots and Decepticons? When Unicron is distracted, Over-Run unlocks the power of the Mini-Con Matrix and the chaos-bringer is destroyed. Or does it?

ENERGON

At the start of *TRANSFORMERS Energon*, the story is back-tracked to the prelude leads into the epic "What Lies Beneath," which introduces new Decepticon character Kickback.

ISSUE #19

Variant covers marked the dramatic transition from *TRANSFORMERS Armada* to *Energon*, and four series regular Guido Guidi art came from the prolific Pat Lee.

WORLDS COLLIDE

A prelude to TRANSFORMERS Energon, "Worlds Collide" introduces the concept of alternate timelines and parallel universes. Having fought his way to TRANSFORMERS Armada Earth, the dimension-hopping Over-Run is shocked to find that one Optimus Prime has vanished, replaced by another, all but dead (*above*). This Prime is stranded on an alternate Cybertron that is about to be consumed by Unicron, and so he now Over-Run must reach him. The fate of this universe (and countless others) rests on Prime and the Mini-Con Matrix acting in concert. But as Over-Run, Sparkplug, Commetor and other Mini-Cons prepare for transdimensional travel, the Autobots and Decepticons on Cybertron and Earth come under attack from Unicron's ruthless heralds.

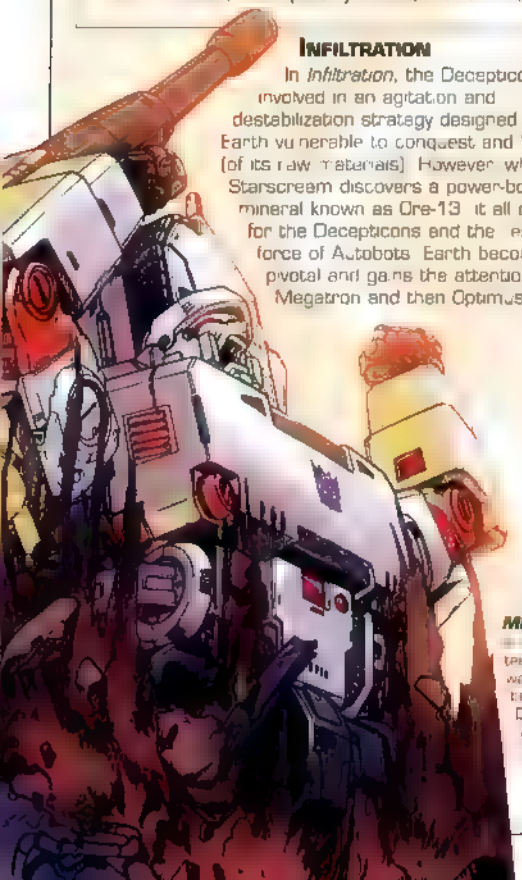
IDW 1

THE MIGHTY WORLD OF MARVEL

BY 2005, THE TRANSFORMERS torch had been passed to IDW Publishing, a small independent comics company best known for its range of horror titles, including the award-winning *30 Days of Night*. Rather than pick up where Dreamwave left off, IDW chose to reboot the Generation 1 concept and start from scratch with a fresh new saga. This new storyline harked back to the classic characters and situations but took a decidedly different look at TRANSFORMERS. Writer Simon Furman and artist E.J. Su went to work, stripping away more than 20 years of often tangled continuity and overlapping generations, and updating the characters and concepts for the 21st century. The result was *TRANSFORMERS Infiltration*, the first arc in an expansive storyline that would redefine TRANSFORMERS comics for a new generation of readers. Long-established saga milestones were replaced with a more direct, conspiracy-laden/covert operations setup.

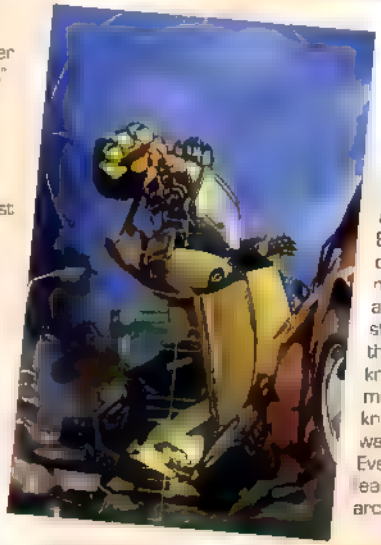
TRANSFORMERS INFILTRATION #0

Though issue #1 of *Infiltration* didn't appear until January 2006, IDW released issue #0 in December 2005. Nominally a prequel story that set in motion the major plots of the series.



INFILTRATION

In *Infiltration*, the Decepticons are involved in an agitation and destabilization strategy designed to render Earth vulnerable to conquest and "harvest" (of its raw materials). However, when Starscream discovers a power-boosting mineral known as Ore-13, it all changes for the Decepticons and the resident force of Autobots. Earth becomes pivotal and gains the attentions of first Megatron and then Optimus Prime.



ESCALATION

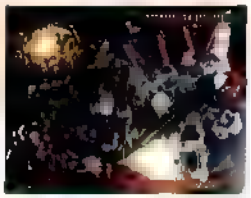
In the second story arc *Escalation*, Optimus Prime and Megatron clash on Earth—the first such confrontation for many millennia. More information about the grand Decepticon strategy is revealed, involving the use of human lookalikes known as "facsimiles." Yet more is learned of the group known as The Machination that was introduced in *Infiltration*. Events gather a furious pace leading into the explosive third arc—*Devastation*.

MEGATRON—RISING!

Issue #4 of *Infiltration* temporarily drew the curtain on the battle between the Autobots and the Decepticons after scoring a major victory. Soundwave stumbled across Jungle's greatest weapon of all—Megatron.

KIDNAP

When Sunstreaker is abducted, Ratchet and Wheeljack join Prime in probing the mystery in *Escalation* #3.



Cover A
full wraparound

Cover B
colour variant

Cover C
pencil sketch

STORMBRINGER

As *Infiltration* unfolded on Earth, IDW took time out—courtesy of the four-issue *Stormbringer* limited series—to look in on Cybertron. Set in the same *Infiltration/Escalation* continuity and feeding back into the ongoing story arc, Cybertron is revealed as an uninhabitable ghost world. It has long since been abandoned by the Autobots and the Decepticons. In the wake of a catastrophic eco-collapse brought on by the civil war, Autobot scientist Jetfire and his crew of Technobots attempt to pinpoint a rogue energy reading coming from the planet. However, when they do so they unearth a terrifying plot to reanimate a being that once almost laid waste to Cybertron. This precipitates an all-out conflict, with the Autobots and Decepticons united against an unstoppable, almost invulnerable foe: Thunderwing. Artist Don Figueroa returned to G1 for this mini-epic/tie-in.

GHOST WAR

Technobot Scattershot falls foul of one [illegible]'s fanatical [illegible] Decepticons. Clad in light-warping armour, the Decepticons are unseen [illegible] until they strike.

THUNDERWING

Former Decepticon scientist Thunderwing developed a symbiotic and super-reinforced second skin to survive the collapse of Cybertron's ecosystem. But the bonding process drives him insane, and his subsequent rampage almost tears Cybertron apart!

SPOTLIGHT

Adding further breadth and depth to the new TRANSFORMERS universe, the semi-ongoing *TRANSFORMERS Spotlight* features a different key character each issue. The largely self-contained story lines feed back into or provide background to the ongoing story arcs. Kicking off with Shockwave (also featuring the Dinobots), the series has expanded to highlight the likes of Nightbeat, Hot Rod, Sixshot, Ultra Magnus, Soundwave, Kup, and Galvatron.

SHOCKWAVE

Directly [illegible] *Infiltration* and *Stormbringer*, Shockwave's [illegible] experiments [illegible] energon have dramatic and unforeseen consequences. These experiments lead to a [illegible] with the Dinobots on pre-historic Earth and subsequent entombment. All the protagonists are buried under tons of rock/ice for the next 10,000 or so years.

NIGHTBEAT

Autobot detective Nightbeat's penchant for unsolved mysteries leads him into the killer clutches of the inhabitants of a dead universe. Intent on an all-out invasion by ex-Cybertronians

IDW 2

THE MIGHTY WORLD OF MARVEL

WHILE *INFILTRATION* PAVED its own, distinct path, effectively reinventing the world of Generation 1, IDW launched several limited or ongoing series. These new series focused on existing concepts or indulged in "what if?" scenarios around the classic G1 idea. First was *Beast Wars: The Gathering*, a four-issue series by Simon Furman and Don Figueroa that laced itself into the classic CG-animated series. Suggested in the twilight of the Dreamwave era, the *Beast Wars* comic series saw the light of day in February 2006 (courtesy of IDW). Next came *TRANSFORMERS Evolutions*. Beginning with *Hearts of Steel*, this series took the G1 concept of the TRANSFORMERS on Earth and placed the story in different eras. Lastly, *TRANSFORMERS Generations* reprinted stories from the original Marvel comics.

Magmatron's (pre-beast) Cybertronian form (by Figueroa)

THE GATHERING
Set during Season 3 of the animated TV series, *The Gathering* had a new cast of Maximals and Predacons. This series expanded the Beast Wars universes by using toys that weren't in the TV series.

MAGMATRON
A feared Predacon General from the last Great War on Cybertron, Magmatron harbored a burning desire to crush the ruling Maximal imperium. To achieve this aim, he traveled to Earth's past to recruit additional Predacon warriors, reactivating dormant Maximal protoforms (housed in special stasis pods) and realigning their loyalties with a so-called shell-program. His efforts were, in part, frustrated by Razorbeast, and a second Beast Wars began.

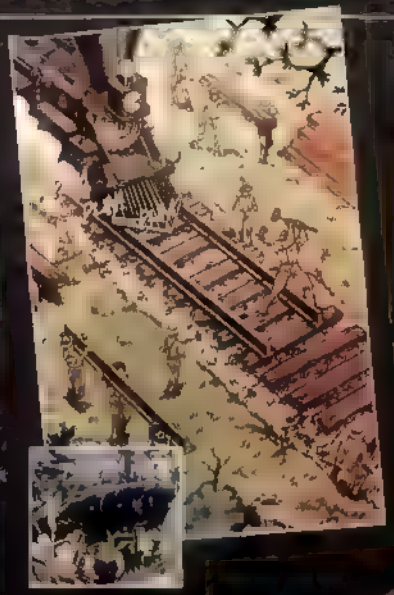
RAZORBEAST
Maximal agent Razorbeast traveled back in time with the Predacon unit. His mission was to learn about Magmatron's dire plans for present-day Cybertron. Forced to reveal his allegiance, Razorbeast became Magmatron's public enemy number one.

Hearts of Steel

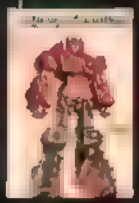
What if instead of awakening on Earth in 1984 (like the classic G1 scenario) the TRANSFORMERS were roused in some other era of Earth's past or future? That was the concept behind IDW's *TRANSFORMERS Evolutions* series. The first of these was the four-issue *Hearts of Steel*, set in circa 1857 and focused on the rapid expansion of the railroad across the USA. Written by TRANSFORMERS first-timer Chuck Dixon and illustrated by Guido Guidi, *Hearts of Steel* required an evolution for the characters, and their alternate modes too, into "steam-age" equivalents that included locomotives and iron battleships.

TIME TRAVEL

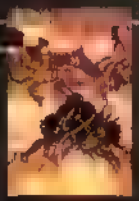
Guido Guidi had to do not one but two sets of character redesigns for *Hearts of Steel*. Originally, the characters are seen in the Ice Age and then, following an enforced hibernation of thousands of years, the "steam age."



Cover B (concept art)



Cover C (retailer incentive sketch)



VARIANT COVERS

In common with most of IDW's TRANSFORMERS output, *Hearts of Steel* came complete with variant covers, including retailer incentives (designed to drive up orders).

TRACKS OF TIMNOR

Hearts of Steel's railroad theme culminates in the Autobots' attempts to derail a speeding Astrotrain, bound for New York and total power. The Autobots are helped by familiar faces from the past (see below). With their mission accomplished, they return to hibernation.

FAMOUS FACES

Chuck Dixon gives *Hearts of Steel* a human supporting cast drawn from real life and American folklore. Authors Mark Twain (*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*) and Jules Verne (*20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*) are joined by folk hero John Henry, the personification of the railroad's pioneering drive across North America.

Mark Twain

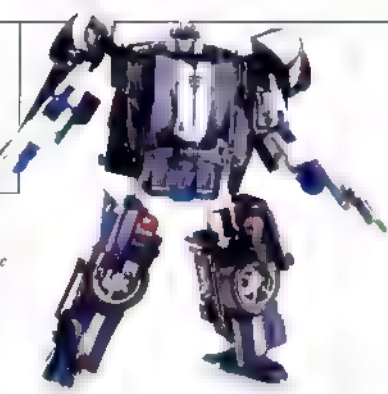
John Henry

Jules Verne

ALTERNATORS

GROWN-UP TRANSFORMERS

WITH THE ENERGON and Cybertron toy lines catering for the younger market, Hasbro and its Japanese counterpart, Takara, turned their attention to the older fans who craved realistic vehicles, classic Generation 1 characters, and the die-cast metal and rubber tires of toys past. Their response was Alternators (Binaltech in Japan) a toy line based on present day vehicles with the emphasis on detail consistency, and realism. For these toys, Takara and Hasbro secured official licenses from all of the car manufacturers before production began. In Japan, Binaltech was given a back-story, centring on a group known as the EDC (Earth Defence Command) and man-made mechanical life-forms, into which the personalities of those robots wounded by "cosmic rust" were transferred



Extendable (G1) rifle

Robot mode

Mirage

Hound

Shockblast

Robot mode

Robot mode

Vehicle mode

G1 style weapon (with insignia)

Side Swipe

Released in Japan as Lambor, Side Swipe transforms into a Dodge Viper SRT 10 (instead of its previous incarnation as a Lamborghini). Side Swipe is now two words though some versions of the packaging did have it as one word. Almost identical other than some chest paintwork) to its Japanese equivalent, the Alternators Side Swipe has plastic rather than die-cast metal parts.

Vehicle mode

Smokescreen

Released in late 2003, Smokescreen was the first figure to go on general sale in the Alternators toy line. Smokescreen is a 1:24 scale reproduction of a Subaru WRC 2003 racing car in Japan. Takara released two versions of this toy and a third in 2004 (this time with a missile launcher). In common with most Alternators releases, the packaging did not feature any of the technical specification information that featured on the Binaltech packaging.

Shoulder mounted doors

Wheeljack

The original G1 Wheeljack was based on Lancia's race-tuned Stratos Turbo. The new Alternators version of the character is the equally sporty Ford Mustang, the street-tuned GT model. Painted with the same coal stripes of the actual Mustang GT, Wheeljack is now blue and white instead of his classic red and blue colors. In robot mode, the angled, shoulder-mounted doors are a subtle visual nod to the G1 Wheeljack. Alternators Grimlock is based on the exact same mold, but it doesn't have the rear spoiler.

Vehicle mode

Drive shaft/ sword

Engine/sidearm

Weaponry

CLASSICS TOYS

THE RETURN OF THE HEROES

WITH THE CYBERTRON toy line winding down, and still some time to go before the release of the blockbuster TRANSFORMERS live-action movie in 2007 (with its own themed toy line), Hasbro turned to its classic roster of Generation 1 characters to fill the intervening period. TRANSFORMERS Classics brought back much-loved characters like Optimus Prime, Megatron and Grimlock, paying homage to the original toys while using modern production techniques and adding extra play features. Whereas Cybertron toys were pitched at a young age group and Alternators more at the over-30s who'd grown up with the originals, Classics appealed across the board, provoking positive fan response and excellent sales

Jetfire

Classics Jetfire really has something for everyone. While evoking the original toy it also crosses over with the cartoon version of the character Skyfire, as both have two distinct heads. Part of Wave 2 of the Classics line, Jetfire is the larger "Voyager" size and was used as the model for Jetfire in IDW's *Stormbringer* comic series

Shoulder cannon

Rodimus

Unable to trademark the name Hot Rod (as it was considered too generic), the Classics version was re-dubbed Rodimus. The alternate mode is an updated version of the classic vehicle, with its hood-mounted engine and wide V-shaped spoiler. The flame-shaped missile launcher doubles as an exhaust flare and Rodimus wields the handsaw device from *Transformers: The Movie*

Megatron

Hasbro had wrestled with the problem of reissuing G1 Megatron for many years because of legal limitations on children's toys that in any way resembled an actual firearm. Classics Megatron is a "blaster," a more acceptable sci-fi version of his original alternate form. Though sporting "approved" colors and demonstrably not a Walther P-38 gun, Megatron's design (robot and alternate mode) is still reminiscent of the original

Starscream

Classic Starscream retains a lot of the G1 F-15 fighter jet characteristics. He will even fit into the early versions with the Aerialbots and Superion, though the best results are with the two-in-one Jetstorm. Classic Starscream could evolve into the straight-wing F-15 Eagle with some minor tweaks. A nice touch is the addition of some of the cartoon series' colours, especially in the cartoon series

Robot mode

Robot mode

Bumblebee

Originally Bumblebee was designed as a possible Alternator, but the VW Beetle was different to the toy makers. As a Classics character, Bumblebee follows on the Stealth Hatchback, the VW Bug, and he can drive back to produce a hybrid. Just still peeves, but original. Included is a new robot accessory named Wave Crasher

Vehicle mode

Grimlock

While the Classics version of Grimlock retains the look and feel of the original, the influence of Beast Wars can clearly be seen in its Tyrannosaurus Rex alternate mode. The original toy's transformation was tricky and straight, whereas the Classics version is easier to get right, but becomes a smaller, less weapon

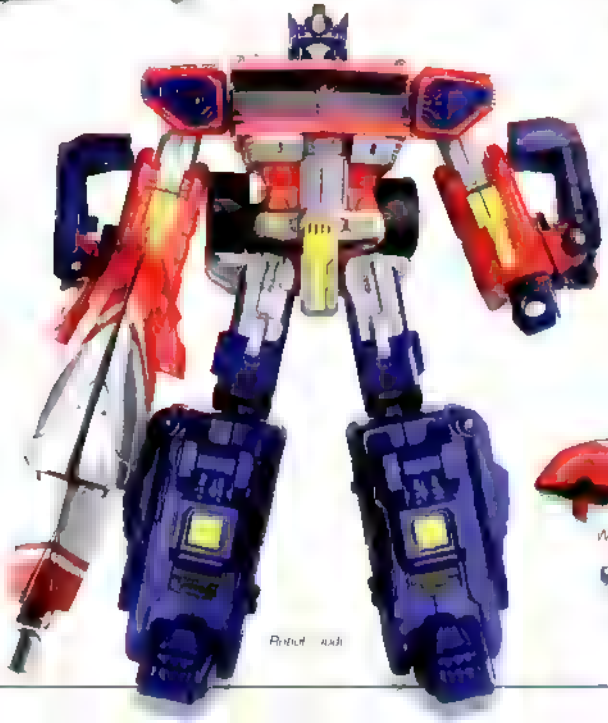
Robot mode

Vehicle mode

Dinosaur mode

Optimus Prime

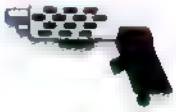
As with other Classics characters, Optimus Prime's vehicular (truck only) modes are carefully and lovingly updated while retaining the overall look and feel of the original. Though the feet of this version appears flat like the original, there are a little curves that give it a more modern feel. As a nod to the original G1 figure, Classics Prime comes with a heat sensitive Autobot "crib" symbol



Arm shields

Robot mode

Weaponry



Vehicle mode

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The following abbreviations are used to distinguish the various "generations":
G1 = Generation 1
G2 = Generation 2
BW = Beast Wars
BM = Beast Machines
RID = TRANSFORMERS Robots In Disguise
TA = TRANSFORMERS Armada
TE = TRANSFORMERS Energon
DW = Dreamwave Comics
IDW = IDW Publishing
TAL = TRANSFORMERS Alternators
TC = TRANSFORMERS Classics

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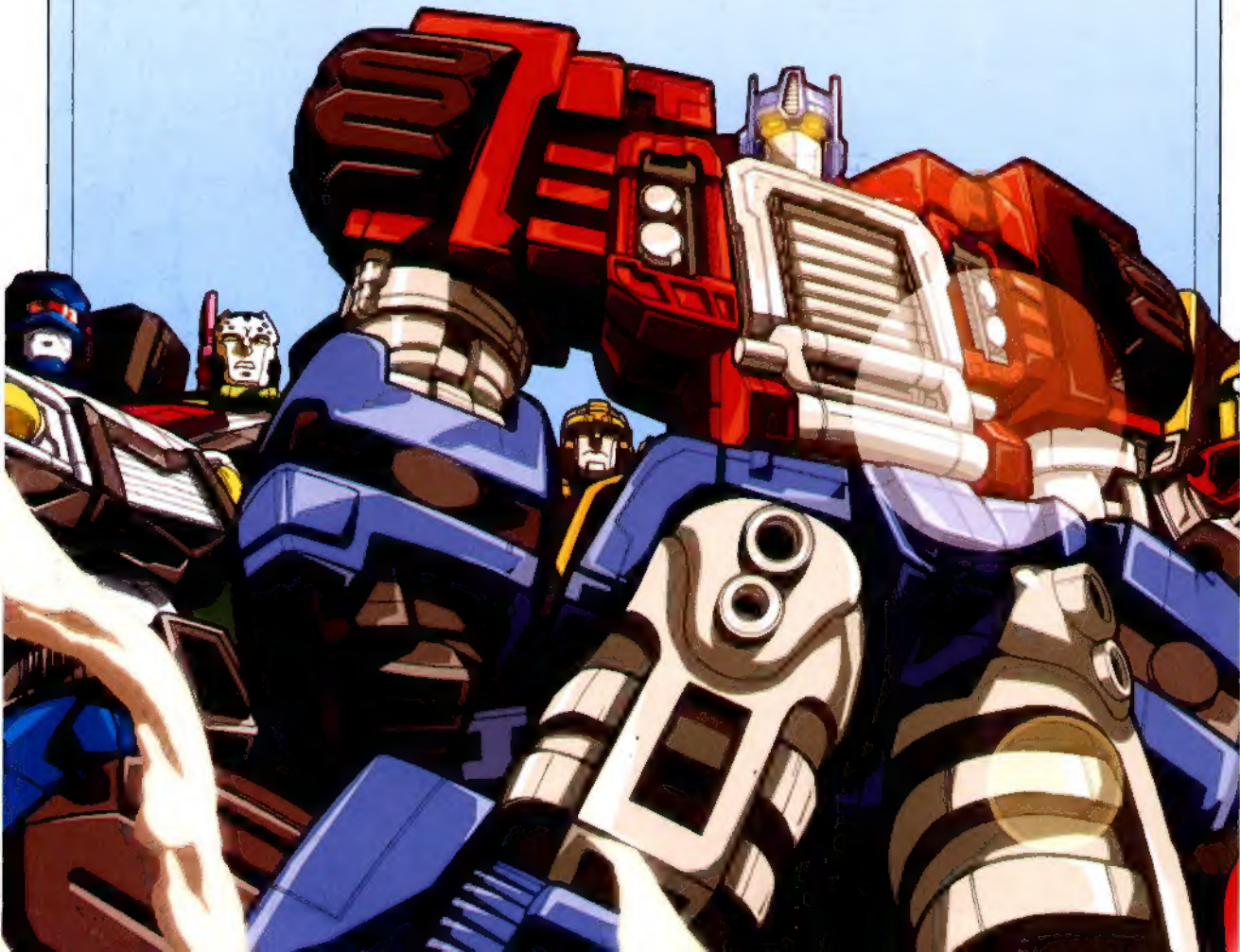

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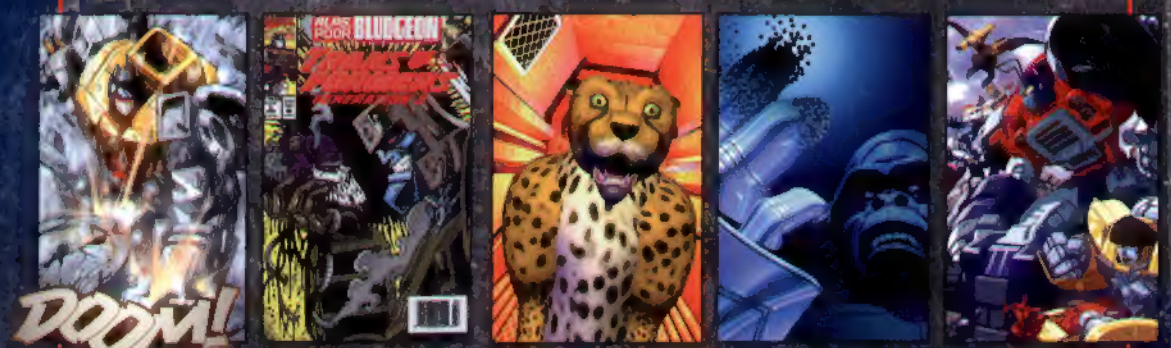

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